

**THE PROBLEM OF SAFETY AND SECURITY IN MANAGING EFFECTIVE TEACHING  
AND LEARNING IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**by**

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## SYNOPSIS

The problem of safety and security at schools has been identified as one of the main problems that schools are facing in the new millennium. The researcher is of the opinion that if the problem of safety and security in primary schools is not addressed soon, it will not only stunt the learners' education but in the end, it will also impact negatively on the future development of the country. In terms of Section 29 of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996): everyone has the right to a basic education, which also entails the right to a safe and secure learning and teaching environment.

This research project could be valuable to school managers and SGBs of primary schools. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school with the specific reference to a primary school in Sasolburg. The goal of education, which is to prepare the learners for the future, will not be achieved if learners there are still problems of safety and security at schools.

This study explored the perceptions of educators on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The researcher conducted two focus group interviews with educators including SMTs and SGB members at a participating school. The interview schedule was unstructured with open-ended questions. The interviewees are also given a voice on how the phenomenon of the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the participating primary school can manifest itself.

The findings revealed that during sports training sessions, some educators are not always present and learners are injuring themselves. Educators are not supervising learners during breaks and they have a tendency to leave learners unattended in classes. They are also leaving early after school thereby leaving learners unattended in the school premises, and there are also no security guards at the gate.

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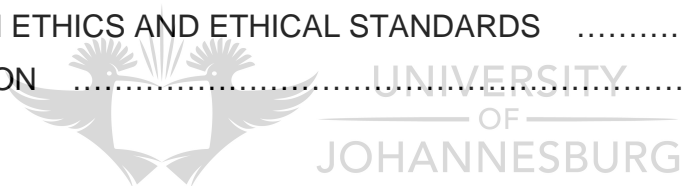
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The South African school system has undergone some rapid changes since the inception of a new political dispensation in 1994. These changes have put an extra burden on the principals of the schools who are the main drivers of change. Schools are increasingly facing various forms of problems. One of these is the increasing problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary schools. The problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary schools has undesirable consequences for learners and their emotional and their physical wellbeing. The safety and security of learners at school should receive great attention at all times. In primary schools, the risk of injury is higher, especially when learners are between the ages of seven and fifteen (Seefeld & Barbour, 2006:434). "A single act of violence within the school has the potential to destroy any possibility of a safe and orderly environment. It deters the fundamental purpose of schools (Hill & Hill, 1994:16)."

Learners depend on the guidance and supervision of responsible adults to help them learn appropriate behaviour (Marotz, Cross & Rush, 2007:188). Some learners experience acts of violence like bullying, stealing and injury to themselves and others while at school. Supervision is necessary as it helps to reduce unnecessary accidents at school. According to Bray, Van Wyk and Oosthuizen (1989:97), educators should bear in mind that they are dealing with immature learners who lack the necessary power of judgment. Educators are required to supervise learners closely in order to avoid being held liable in case a learner is injured.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

The problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, has been identified as one of the main problems which schools are facing, as cited in the research conducted by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) In Irin News (2008:1). If the problem of safety and security in primary schools is not addressed, it will stunt children's education and jeopardise the future development of the country.

Schools are increasingly facing various forms of problems such as learners who come to school with weapons like guns and knives (Xaba, 2006:564). Some learners stab and shoot others intentionally or unintentionally. Xaba (2006:565) posits that learners bring those weapons because they do not feel safe at schools, or they intend to take revenge on those who bully them. According to Murray, Gereige, Grant, Lamont, Magalnick, Monteverdi, Pattishall III, Roland, Wheeler, Devore and Barnett (2008:895), schools are supposed to be safe havens for millions of children and the greatest socialising institutions after the family, but more and more chaos is occurring in schools.

Trump (2008:1) states that, "on the problem of school safety and security of learners, school staff and parents alike are watching school violence that is increasingly violating this sanctuary which is the school." Learners are injuring themselves and disrupting their educational process. The problem of violence because of the lack of safety and security of learners at schools is prevalent in many South African schools. Varma In Lalloo (2004:18) states that school violence occurs because of a breakdown in the wider social system such as, the family, neighbourhood, school and community. Varma further states that, schools must be committed more deeply than ever before to paying attention to learners' social and emotional lives. According to Shelton, Owens and Song (2009:24-29), in the US, violence at school has a negative impact on the health of learners, educators, non-teaching staff and others associated with the school and surrounding community. However, Xaba (2006:566) posits that in South Africa, township schools are vulnerable to unsafe conditions and threats of violence, all of which result in the problem

of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in schools. In primary schools, the risk of injury is higher because the learners are younger. Just as people's wellness depends on constant maintenance in their lives, making the schools the safe institutions requires constant arrangement of interwoven factors (Duke, 2002:98).

Wherever learners are, educators must always be in their midst. In supervision, educators take particular care of the safety and wellbeing of the learners (Prinsloo & Beckman, 2005:121). Therefore, it is necessary to supervise learners as it helps to reduce unnecessary accidents at school. Educators are required to supervise learners closely in order to avoid being held liable in case a learner is injured. Most of the accidents at schools happen during break and that is when the learners have to be closely supervised.

In this researcher's opinion, the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in primary schools manifest itself in various forms, to mention few, the physical environment such as unhygienic conditions of the toilets and an environment that is not children friendly. According to Prinsloo and Beckman (2005:149), even poisonous plants in the learners' environment like decorative shrubs can be a source of danger to learners. Some of those shrubs have thorns that can pierce learners when they play around them. Some learners are very curious and they might taste the leaves or the flowers especially when the smell from them is very nice. Another source of danger in the learners' environment can be the wooden stakes planted for the protection of young trees. It is true that these are protecting the young trees but they pose a danger to young learners. Learners can easily be harmed when they play around those wooden stakes. These are only a few, there are numerous others. According to Smith (2007:144), learners must always be aware of existing dangers in their environment and they must have skills to cope with those dangers successfully.

Research conducted by Irin News (2008:1) contend that the South African school system has distinguished itself by coming last or very low down the scale in a number of schooling quality surveys over recent years, despite the fact that South Africa is one of

the highest resourced countries in Africa. Molokela (2003:11) identifies problems of shooting and stabbing of learners in South African schools even though there are safety measures in hand like security guards and CCTV cameras. In some schools, there is no fence surrounding the school premises and school gates are not always locked (Molokela, 2008:13). When learners feel unsafe, the culture of learning will be hindered. One cannot learn properly when he/she has a feeling of fear (Wanko, 2001:19).

Safe and secure schools are required by the law, and thus Section 12 of the Constitution, (RSA, 1996) states that everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person. Sections 24 and 28 of the Constitution (RSA, 1996), stipulate, "Everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and wellbeing". Birnbaum (2001:11) states that in the United States, a "safe schools" law facilitated the legal removal of disruptive children from public school classrooms, waiving key school-systems rules in order to enable the establishment of alternative educational programmes. He further states that the use of weapons in school buildings or on school grounds accounts for the majority of violent deaths, particularly among males. In South Africa, the South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996) states clearly that, the governing body of a public school may, after a fair hearing suspend a learner from school. This could be done as a correctional measure for a period not longer than one week.

According to Oosthuizen (2003:87), the legal implications arising from the dangerous situations to which learners are exposed, differ from case to case. Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge and Ngcobo (2008:29), postulate that a public school must take measures to ensure the safety of learners during any school activity. Schools must put security measures in place for example, when the school is hosting a game. By so doing the school will ensure the safety of spectators coming to watch the game (Prinsloo & Beckman, 2005:137). According to SASA (1996), all public schools should be declared drug free and dangerous object free zones. No person may allow any dangerous objects onto school premises or possess illegal drugs on public school premises. Marotz et al., (2007:179) state that curiosity and impulsive behaviour often lead young learners into new and unexpected dangers. Learners are most likely to suffer injuries because they are



too playful and therefore fail to take heed of dangerous objects lying around them. At the same time, learners are not always able to anticipate the possible consequences of their actions because they lack an adult's maturity, experience and intellectual sophistication.

### **1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

These types of studies are generally conducted at the secondary school level, neglecting the primary school phase where early childhood development should take place in a safe and secure environment. The researcher is of the opinion that such a research project could be valuable to educators, school managers and SGBs of primary schools. The motivation for undertaking this study resulted from an incident that occurred at Nieuwoudt Primary School in the Western Cape whereby two grade two learners killed another learner. It is alleged that they killed that boy because he owed them R5. The perpetrators and the culprit were all eight years old (The Teacher, 2007:4). This incident highlighted the problem of safety and security in most of the primary schools. The majority of the acts of violence are committed by learners who are of school going age because all the reported cases were committed in schools by school going learners. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, with specific reference to a primary school in Sasolburg. The problem of safety and security at schools can hinder learning and can have a negative impact on the literacy and numeracy rate. According to Farrant (2003:19), the goal of education is lifelong learning and to fit young learners to cope with the future. This goal of education, which is to prepare the learners for the future, will not be achieved if learners have the problem of safety and security at schools.

### **1.4 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework that undergirds this study is Structural Functionalism (SF). This study has adopted SF for the following reasons.

- (a) Systems tend towards self maintaining, involving the maintenance of boundaries and their relationship of part, this relates to relevant educational legislation and school governance and its relationship to the child, the family and the community.
- (b) Systems are involved in an ordered process towards social change.
- (c) The nature of one part of the system has an impact on the form that the other parts can take. The pervasiveness of the problem of safety and security in primary schools necessitates their further research. Principals and SGBs who are faced with the problem on daily basis need more information.

Babbie (2007:37) maintains that SF is also known as social systems theory. According to de Marrais and le Compte (1995:6), SF is originally derived from the Social Transmission Theories. They further maintain that SF is based upon the assumption that human systems have an underlying but observable coherence based upon formal rules, signs and arrangements. Parsons in Ritzer (2008:243) defines SF as “a social system consist in a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of tendency to the optimization of gratification. Their relation to their situations including each other is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols”. “Structural functionalism and the Durkheimian tradition in sociology focused on the social systems as a whole, its functional requirements, and the ways that these requirements are met (Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff and Virk, 2007:26)”. Merton in Ritzer and Goodman (2003:244) maintains that the focus of SF should be on social functions rather than on individual motives. The functions that Merton is referring to are the observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system and goal attainment or success in reaching the goals. Timasheff and Theodorson (1996:246) maintain that social systems represent a real system in which the parts perform functions essential for the persistence of the whole and are interdependent and integrated. Betalnaffy in Hatch (2006:37) postulates that SF forms a hierarchy whereby “societies contain groups, groups contain individuals, individuals are comprised of organs, organs of cells, cells of molecules, molecules of atoms”. McKinney and Tiryakian (1990:394) maintain that SF considers order in society and therefore a reasonably stable form of


government. Ritzer (2007:64) indicates that SF is concerned with the relationship among the large-scale structures of society, for example the educational system and the economic system.

Against this background, educational managers and leaders are required to provide educational, physical and mental safety and security to all learners. It is with these factors in mind that the research project was conceptualised.

In view of the above, the problems of this research are encapsulated and the following **main question** will be posed:

How safe and secure are learners in primary schools?

To assist in eliciting the rich data, the following **sub questions** will be posed:

- 
1. How effective are the School Management Teams (SMTs) in the application of safety policies at schools?
  2. How involved are the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in the creation of a safe environment at schools?
  3. How do educators perceive safety and security of learners at schools?

## **1.5 AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

The general aim of this research project is to explore the measures of safety and security of learners in primary schools.

In order to realise the general aim, it is necessary to have the following specific aims.

1. to investigate the effectiveness of the SMTs in the application of safety policies at schools;
2. to determine the level of involvement of SGBs in creating a safe environment at school and;

3. to probe the perceptions of educators on learner safety and security at schools.

## **1.6 DELIMITATION OR SCOPE OF THE INVESTIGATION AND LIMITATIONS**

This study was not conducted in all the provinces of South Africa. Instead, the researcher concentrated in a Sasolburg school, Fezile Dabi District, in the Free State Province. This study reviews the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school in Sasolburg. The researcher is responsible for formulating all the open-ended questions, on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, for the purpose of group interviews with the participants. This study is based on the experiences of educators, SMTs and SGBs who come from the same school.

The respondents of this study were sampled based on certain criteria, black, female or male educators, SMTs and SGBs, as the researcher needed to understand, discover and gain insight into the problem. The educators, SMTs and SGBs in the sample were between the ages of thirty and fifty as those are the ages in the teaching profession. The sample included the educators, SMTs and SGBs. This researcher believes that this scope of sample, the participants chosen, were the best to achieve her objectives as this enabled her to explore the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the Sasolburg primary school. This will be done by questions asked and answered during the focus group interviews, which will be conducted. This choice of criterion-based strategy was guided by the research paradigm of qualitative research.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research study will employ the qualitative research approach because it will assist the researcher to comprehend and explain the phenomenon (the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school) with a little disruption of the natural settings as possible (Merriam, 1998:5). Qualitative research design is any kind of research that its producers did not arrive at any means of statistical

procedures. The qualitative research method is richly descriptive because words and pictures are used to convey what the researcher has learnt about the phenomenon (Merriam, 1988:8). In order to address the research question, which is “How safe and secure are learners in primary schools?” The researcher will use inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning means that the researcher will use everyday reasoning when observing the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school (Mouton, 2001:118). In this case, the researcher will begin with a set of observations of participants and their views. Qualitative research is also an approach to the relationship between theories of research in which the former is generated out of the latter (Babbie, 2007:49). Creswell (2003:18) defines qualitative research as knowledge claims that are based on multiple meanings of individual experiences. Those meanings are socially constructed and the purpose is to develop a theory. It usually uses the strategies of inquiry such as case studies.

#### **1.7.1 Data collection methods**

Data collection is a way of collecting information from the participants. Data will be collected through observations, interviews and documents (Creswell, 2003:185).

##### **1.7.1.1 Observations**

The researcher will spend sufficient time at school, where the participants carry out their daily tasks and have their daily conversation in order to be eventually able to render the thick description. The researcher will take field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site. The advantage of this type of observation is that the researcher will have first-hand experience with participants. Its limitations are that it might affect the collection of data because some participants may present problems in gaining rapport and the researcher may appear to be intrusive (Creswell 2003:186). The researcher will spend a period of three weeks with educators, members of the SGBs as parents of learners who are attending this school that is being investigated.

### **1.7.1.2 Interviews**

This research study will use the qualitative focus group interviews as the core method of data collection. Teachers including the principals from the participating school were interviewed in a group. Qualitative interviews emphasised the active participation of the interviewer. The interviews will be unstructured with open-ended questions. The interviewees will be given the voice to say something on the phenomenon, the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. All the interviews will be audio taped after the permission for this has been obtained. Those recordings will be transcribed verbatim and all the resulting text will be analysed (Rubin & Rubin, 1995:31). The researcher will conduct the focus group interviews with the participants. However, Merriam (1998:70) postulates that interviewing is the most common form of data collection in qualitative studies in education. He further states that in numerous studies it is the only source of data. Interviews in this research study will be the core data collection method. The interviews will involve unstructured and open-ended questions.



### **1.7.1.3 Documents**

The researcher will use the documents as one of the methods of data collection and these will be the public documents such as newspaper articles, media reports, minutes of the meetings and letters. The researcher will collect and scrutinise the documents during the process of inquiry. The advantage of this data collection method is that it will enable the researcher to obtain the language and words of participants. Its limitations are that it will require the researcher to search out information in hard-to-find places, some of those documents might be incomplete and might have not been authentic enough (Creswell, 2003:186-187).

### **1.7.2 Population and sampling**

All the primary schools in Sasolburg will be the population, but in this research, a sample is a school that will actually be investigated by the researcher from the population (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:98). It forms the subset of the whole population, which will actually be investigated, and its characteristics will be generalised to the entire population. In Sasolburg, in the Free State province, there are 15 primary schools and one school will be selected to compare for the selection of cases. Sample selection in this research study will be a purposeful one. "Since qualitative research focuses on process, meaning and understanding, the product of qualitative study is richly descriptive (Merriam, 1998:8)." The researcher will choose twelve educators from the participating school that will make two focus groups of six participants each. One specific primary school in Sasolburg will be the unit of analysis. According to Babbie (2007:95), the samples are examined in order to create summary descriptions of all such units and to explain differences among them. Bless et al., (2006:72) postulate that the unit of analysis is the person or object from whom the social researcher collects data. The data from such a unit can only describe that unit. However, Mouton (2001:51) states, "the unit of analysis refers to the *what* of the study" which in this research study is the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.

### **1.7.3 Data analysis**

Collected data will be interpreted for drawing conclusions that reflected the interests, ideas and theories that will initiate the inquiry. The researcher will analyse data using the approach of collecting and analysing data simultaneously (Merriam, 1998:151.) Data analysis will be an ongoing process during research. It will involve analysing participant information and will use open-ended data. Transcriptions will be read carefully. Topics will be listed and themes that will be collected from the same topics will be turned into categories. The researcher will make comparisons between categories in order to find connections between themes. Categories will be coded. Data belonging to each category will be assembled. The researcher will recode the existing data (Creswell, 2003:192).

According to Creswell (2003:220), there are strategies that are used to check the accuracy of the findings for the qualitative data and they need to be mentioned. These will include triangulating data sources and detailed descriptions. Triangulation of data will perceive value in demonstrating rigour. Triangulation will address the issue of internal validity by using more than one method of data collection to answer a research question.

#### **1.7.4 Trustworthiness**

To ensure trustworthiness in this inquiry, the researcher will use the strategies recommended by Creswell (2003:196) such as triangulation of different data source of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for them. The researcher will use member checking to determine the accuracy of qualitative findings by taking the final report or themes back to participants. The researcher will determine whether the participants will feel that they were accurate. Rich and thick descriptions will convey the findings that will be used. This process can transport readers to the setting and give discussion on element of shared experiences. The researcher will clarify any biases brought to the study. The researcher believes that self-reflection creates an open and honest narrative and this can resonate well with readers. Furthermore, negative or discrepant information that runs the counter will be presented, because real life is composed of different perspectives that do not always coalesce. Discussing contrary information adds to the credibility of an account of the reader. The researcher will spend considerable time in the field and in this way, the researcher will develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey details about the site and the people that lend credibility to the narrative account. This process will involve locating a person (a peer debriefer) who will review and ask questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher. The researcher will use an external auditor to review the entire project. As distinct from a peer defriefer, this auditor will be new to the research and the project and could provide an assessment of the project throughout the process of research as well as at the conclusion of the study.



### **1.7.5 Validity**

The validity of an instrument is detected by the ability of that instrument to evaluate what it is supposed to evaluate. According to Conrad and Serlin (2006:412), the results and findings of the research is internally valid when the researcher can draw meaningful inferences from instruments that measure what they intend to measure. Findings are externally valid, or generalisable, when they extend to certain individuals and settings beyond those immediately studied. The researcher believes that the instruments that will be used in this study are valid and they measure what they are supposed to measure and that the researcher's findings are generalisable.

### **1.7.6 Reliability**

Reliability can be described as the degree of consistency or stability of data. Conrad and Serlin (2006:412) claim that findings are reliable when other researchers using the same approach come to the same result. The researcher intends for other researchers to examine his/her data in the hope that the findings are reliable. The research methodology that will be used in this study will be briefly explained in this section. The reader will find more detailed clarification of these methods and designs employed in this study in Chapter Three.

## **1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

Researchers need to define terms as they are introduced in all sections of the research plan (Creswell 2003:143). Therefore, some of the concepts used in this study will be clarified briefly in this chapter. Discussions about them will also appear in the chapters to follow.

### **1.8.1 Learners**

SASA (1996) states that “Learner” means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education”. In this study, a word “learner” refers to school going children in primary schools of South Africa. The term will be used interchangeably with “children”.

### **1.8.2 Safety**

Hawkins (2000:713) defines safety as a state of being safe, being free from bodily harm, risk or danger and being exempt from hurt or injury. However, Squelch (2001:25) defines safety as being able to think and feel without fear.

### **1.8.3 Security**

In the Oxford Dictionary security means freedom or protection from danger. According to Oosthuizen (2003: 39), “a secure” environment is provided by the educator with a level of certainty and security in his/her attitude towards learners.

### **1.8.5 Violence**

Violence is an act of physical attack or taking property from the learner directly by force, weapons or threats (Duke, 2002:16). When acts of violence are regularly taking place in the school premises, it means that there are no safety measures at a particular school.

### **1.8.6 Educator**

The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA) defines an “educator” as the person who teaches, educates and trains other persons, or who provides professional therapy at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic educational centre, and who is appointed at any educator establishment under the EEA.

### **1.8.7 School**

The Oxford dictionary defines a “school” as an institution for educating children or an institution offering the formal education for children or adults. According to Naidu et al., “schools” are particular kind of organisations with clearly defined goals. They operate through a hierarchical structure of authority, in every school, there are particular aspects or elements that make up the school organisation. A school is a niche where people join to learn, regardless of their age, occupation or home address (Senge, 1994:487).

## **1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

### **Chapter 1**

In Chapter One, the topic is introduced and it provides the background and orientation to the research problem. Rationale to the study, theoretical framework, aims of the research and objectives are described, delimitation or scope of the investigation and limitations, research design and methodology are discussed. Concepts to be used in the study are explained.

### **Chapter 2**

This chapter contains the literature review with focus on the factors that contribute to the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in a primary school.

### **Chapter 3**

This chapter focuses on the empirical design and methodology used to achieve the objectives of this study. Observations, documents and focus group interviews are used in order to gather data. The interviews will be the core method of this research study.

## **Chapter 4**

Gathered data is analysed and interpreted in this chapter.

## **Chapter 5**

Chapter Five presents a summary of all the chapters, findings of the study and recommendations geared towards developing measures aimed at ensuring safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school will be made in this chapter.

### **1.10 CONCLUSION**

This first chapter introduced the research focus, which is “the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.” The introduction of this chapter gave an overview of the research focus. This study focused on a township school in Sasolburg. The background to the problem, the statement of the problem, the aim of the research, the research design and methodology, the demarcation of the investigation, the clarification of concepts and an outline of chapters were discussed.

This chapter also gave an overview of the background to the problem that is to be researched. From the background, a better understanding of the need for the research was given. The inadequacy of the concerning measures of safety and security of learners was discussed. The importance of learner supervision and safe environment were also highlighted. In Chapter Two, a literature review will be undertaken to formulate a sound conceptual framework of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE PROBLEM OF SAFETY AND SECURITY IN MANAGING EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter One, the background to the problem, rationale, theoretical framework, the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, delimitation or scope of the study and limitations, research design, clarification of concepts and outline of chapters were given. This chapter reviews the literature on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.

A safe school can be defined as “a place where students can learn and educators can teach in a warm welcoming environment, free of intimidation and fear of violence” (Stevens, Wyngaard & van Niekerk, 2001:149). According to Squelch (2001:138), a safe school is characterised by the presence of certain physical aspects such as secure walls, fencing and gates. Buildings that are in a good state of repair and well maintained school grounds must also be considered as being characteristics of a safe school. A safe school is also a healthy school that is physically and psychologically safe (Squelch, 2001:138).

#### **2.2 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNER SAFETY AND SECURITY IN SCHOOLS AND ITS IMPACT ON EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Ensuring safe schools goes hand in hand with regulating school communities, and is closely tied to the behaviours that follow (Morrison, 2007:06). Legislative instruments include the legal principles and rules which are contained in the Bill of Rights, legislation, regulations, departmental policies, the Code of Conduct from the school, administrative rules and common law principles that are applicable to schools (Oosthuizen, de Waal, de Wet, Rossouw, Smith & Huysteen, 2008:77).

### **2.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996, section 28 (1)) makes provision for children's rights. One such right is the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. School as a component of government institutions, is expected to protect and uphold such rights. A public school is therefore not exempted from complying with the provisions of any other applicable law. In terms of Section 29 of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996): everyone has the right to a basic education, which also entails the right to a safe and secure learning and teaching environment. Sections 12 and 24 of the Constitution (RSA, 1996) provide that all people have the right to be protected from all forms of violence and to an environment that is not harmful to their well-being. The Constitution grants every individual person rights such as freedom from personal injury, and the security of life and property.

### **2.2.2 The Bill of Rights**



Oosthuizen (2003:136) is of the opinion that the Bill of Rights enshrines certain fundamental rights, which the state has the duty to respect, promote and uphold. The individual enjoys a number of freedoms, powers and privileges under the Constitution, common law and customary law. Under the former doctrine of parliament sovereignty, the exercise of common law and customary rights was always under the statutory curtailment. Many common law freedoms have now been included in the Bill of Rights. For an example, the common law rights to freedom and security are now protected by the Constitution in Section 12. The Bill of Rights (1996, Section 8 (1)) applies to all law and binds the executive and all organs of the state. State departments and their officials are organs of the state, therefore the Department of Education and all its employees and all the learners are bound by the Bill of Rights.

### **2.2.3 The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996)**

#### **2.2.3.1 Purpose of the Schools Act**

According to Oosthuizen (2003:83), the Schools Act creates the legislative framework for a uniform system of state-aided schools aimed at providing progressively high quality education. The Preamble to the Schools Act affirms the purpose to promote an education climate that is conducive to effective teaching and learning, with the commitment to combat unfair discrimination and intolerance. It also upholds and safeguards human rights and promotes diversity.

#### **2.2.3.2 Functions of the School Governing Body to ensure school safety and security**

The system of school governance enables School Governing Body (SGB) to take specific regulatory and policy measures to improve the safety and security of learners at schools. These measures include among others: to adopt a Code of Conduct (Sections 8 & 20(1) (d)); to conduct disciplinary hearings to suspend or recommend expulsion of ill-disciplined learners (Section 9); to determine the times of the school day (Section 20(1) (f)) and to administer and control the school's properties, buildings and grounds which are occupied by the school (Section 20) (g)). Although these measures do not at first glance seem to address school safety and security directly, the creation of an orderly, secure, respectful school culture and environment by means of well thought out school rules and policies, goes a long way towards establishing safe and secure schools (Squelch, 2001:126).

### **2.2.4 Control and administration of school buildings and facilities**

According to Stevens et al., (2001:129), well cared for school facilities, clean and hygienic toilet facilities, functional equipment and neatly maintained furniture create an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and instils a sense of safety and security of learners. "It is well known that unkempt facilities and poorly maintained property encourage vandalism

and petty forms of misconduct” (Squelch, 2001:126). There is also a visible correlation between the perpetration of petty misconduct and the prevalence of serious misconduct. Programmes and measures to clean up and maintain school environments have led to the reduction of both petty and serious forms of ill discipline.

### **2.2.5 School uniforms as an aspect of safety and security of learners**

Duke (2002:217) is of the opinion that, what learners are wearing to school has become safety issue for several reasons. He argues that gangs typically adopt certain types of clothing and colours so that the members will be readily identifiable. This applies to learners, when they wear a school uniform, they can be easily identifiable.

In the opinion of this researcher, when learners come to school wearing a school uniform, one cannot easily identify which learner is from a rich family due to expensive clothes, or which learner is from a poor family, due to shabby clothes. Purchasing ordinary clothes for children to wear to school may pose an economic hardship for poor parents. In addition if learners can come to school wearing private clothes daily, those who wear expensive clothes can be targets to thugs. Duke (2002:217) contends that in the US, learners have become victims of their own clothes because gangs who wanted their expensive clothes have killed them. Imber and Van Geel (2000:143), conclude that school uniforms are constitutionally permissible when necessary to avoid distraction or disruption of the educational process.

Many individuals who believe uniforms can instil socially appropriate values and behaviour have supported using dress restrictions and uniforms as a low-cost alternative to creating a safe and positive school climate (Cheurprakpobkit & Bartsch, 2005:235). They further argue that uniform reduces competition concerning clothes and helps to identify learners belonging to a school community.

The National Guidelines on School Uniforms, Department of Education (DoE, 2006: Section1) determines that uniforms serve a vital social purpose, and should therefore be



retained at the public schools which do have a uniform. The adoption of a school uniform could not only promote school safety and security, but could also improve discipline and enhance the learning environment. The potential benefits of school uniforms could include the following aspects (DoE, 2006: section six (1-6)):

- (a) decreasing violence and theft, even life threatening situation, among learners over designer clothing or expensive footwear;
- (b) helping prevent gang members from wearing gang colours and insignia at schools;
- (c) instilling discipline in learners by being consistent;
- (d) helping parents and learners to resist peer pressure and the feeling of inferiority and anger;
- (e) helping learners to concentrate on their schoolwork; and
- (f) helping school officials to recognise intruders who arrive at the school.

In the next section, educator's legal duty towards the safety and security of learners, *in loco parentis*, providing an appropriate standard of care, and negligence and intent actions will be discussed.

## **2.3 THE BASIS OF THE EDUCATOR'S DUTY REGARDING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF LEARNERS**

### **2.3.1 Educator's legal duty towards the safety and security of learners**

As in the case of the legal duty of the parent or guardian, there is no certainty regarding the basis of educator's duty to protect a learner against danger (Botha & Oosthuizen, 2003:85). If this were accepted, it would mean that the educator's delegated legal duty would be no different from the legal duty of the parent or the guardian of the child (Oosthuizen, 2003:96). Oosthuizen further maintains that the learner needs the mental and psychological protection because the typical child is vulnerable due to his/her immaturity. The other point of view is that the educator has an original duty (independent of that of the parent or guardian) regarding the safety and security of a learner under

his/her control. If it holds true, it would follow that an educator's legal duty towards a learner would be different from that of the parent or guardian.

Dangerous situations to which learners may be exposed take a multitude of forms in and around the school or during school activities, and the legal implications arising from them differ from case to case. It is essential, however, that each educator and the person who acts as the head of a school are aware of certain general legal principles relating to civil legal liability, which are frequently applied in these situations (Oosthuizen, 2003: 86- 87).

### **2.3.2 *In loco parentis***

Literally translated *in loco parentis* means in the place of a parent. Parents entrust their children to the care of educators during school hours for their physical and mental being (Oosthuizen, 2003:60). In practice, educators act *in loco parentis* while at school to enhance the safety and security of learners. In addition to the educators *in loco parentis* position, the educator's duty of care also stems from the special relationship of trust that exists between an educator and learners (Neethling, Potgieter & Visser, 2006:66-67). It also stems from the general obligation to take control over dangerous objects (Neethling et al., 2006:59).

### **2.3.3 Providing an appropriate standard of care**

An appropriate standard of care will ensure personal rights such as safety and security against invasion by others (Mawdsley, 2003:135). Any act or omission, which unlawfully infringes upon a person's right to safety, is called delict (Oosthuizen, 2003:17). A delict or wrongful action is different from crime. A civil is actioned and maintained by the party for the purpose of obtaining compensation for the damage or injury suffered, whereas in a criminal proceeding, the action is brought by the state to protect the public from the actions of the wrongdoer.

### **2.3.4 Negligence and intent actions**

According to Oosthuizen (2003:146), negligence arises when someone who owes a duty of care breaches that duty and as a result, damage is occasioned to another person. The SGB of a school has to establish a disciplined school environment by adopting a code of conduct.

The conduct of educators is usually wrongful when the legal rights of learners are infringed for no good reason. Even when educators fail to carry out their legal duties without justification this also represent negligence (Naidu et al., 2008:27). They further state that if an educator allows learners to use dangerous equipment without supervision, or even if the educator is aware of the fact that a certain learner is carrying a weapon but does nothing about it, he or she is negligent.

## **2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNER SUPERVISION AS AN ASPECT OF THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF LEARNERS AT SCHOOLS**

### **2.4.1 Educators accountability**

Educators are required to be accountable for the welfare of the learners under his/her care. The safety and security of learners in the classrooms, on the playground, and in all areas surrounding the school fall under their jurisdiction (Rhodes, Hafen, Karren, & Rollins, 2000:342). Supervision is very important in order to minimise the occurrence of injuries and it helps the educators to be accountable for anything that may go wrong. A safe environment is one that is not only free from hazards, but one that contains the presence of a diligent, observing and supervising adult who is accountable at all times (Seefeld & Barbour, 2006:433).

#### **2.4.2 Learner supervision at school**

The climate of teaching and learning created by educators at schools will determine, in great part, the success of a safe and supportive school plan (Wanko, 2001: 208). In the opinion of this researcher, educators are not supposed to wait for injuries and accidents to occur before they can supervise their learners. They always have to be there for those learners who are depending on them for their successes. Supervision is very important in order to minimise the occurrence of injuries. Learners' activities should be supervised in order to prevent needless accidents (Smith, 1997:42). According to Gillham and Thomson (2006:114), some accidents result in death, some in lifelong injury and disability. Supervised learners always do what they are supposed to do because of the presence of an adult.

### **2.5 CREATING A SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO TEACHING AND LEARNING**

#### **2.5.1 Learners' environment at school**



According to SASA (1996, Section 4.6), learners have the right to a clean and safe environment that is conducive to education. Security of property, well cared for school facilities, school furniture and equipment, clean toilet facilities, water and a green environment, the absence of harassment in attending the classes and writing tests and examinations, all create an atmosphere that is conducive to education.

Squelch (2001:138) defines a safe school as one that is free from danger and possible harm, one in which learners, educators and non-teaching staff can work, teach and learn without fear and harassment. Xaba (2006:565) argues that taking care of the basic safety and security features of school's physical environment is an essential step towards ensuring school safety and security. He further maintains that a safe and secure physical environment will make it hard for safety threatening incidents to take place and will make it easy for the school to address issues that threaten the school's psychosocial safety like

bullying on playgrounds. He also contends that, with regard to school safety, the school's physical environment is the most visible aspect of such features as the quality of the security and the maintenance of school buildings and grounds. Learners are extremely active and they constantly explore and test their environment.

According to Wanko (2001:73), safety of the school buildings ensures that buildings are safe for use. Attention must be given to hallways, stairways and verandas where learners walk back and forth between classes. The plumbing and electrical fittings of the school premises must also be taken into consideration. In recent years, schools have implemented a variety of security measures, including security guards, video surveillance, school uniforms and metal detectors. The intent of these enhanced measures is to better manage the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the schools (Shelton et al., 2008:25).

Seefeld and Barbour (2006:433) contend that a safe environment is one that is not only free from hazards, but the one that contains the presence of a diligent, observing and supervising adult. Too often teachers become so involved in classroom instruction in their subject that they ignore or fail to emphasise the total school environment. Teachers must teach learners to cope with the physical hazards that represent a danger to them.

Some schools are situated next to busy roads and therefore require proper traffic control before and after school to allow learners' safe passage. A school can arrange with the traffic department for the service of scholar patrollers. Mawdsley (2000:1450) contend that road accidents are the major cause of child mortality in developed countries.

### **2.5.2 Classrooms**

Squelch (2003:81) postulates that the classrooms must be safe places for learners. Learners must always be supervised while in classes and must not be left unattended. The core business of the educators with the Department of Education is to teach. When teaching those learners, educators must, among their duties, supervise learners in their

classrooms. According to Squelch and Bray (1996:99), the educators have a duty to supervise learners in classrooms. They have to preserve classroom discipline and give them suitable activities.

Educators are obliged to supervise their learners more closely (Marotz et al., 2007: 189). Educators must make a point of ensuring that there are no broken windows in their classrooms because these can cut learners and put their lives at risks. The classroom floors are not supposed to be slippery because if learners can fall their bones could break. The legs of the chairs must be stabilised.

### **2.5.3 Playgrounds**

Playgrounds at schools are the most dangerous places because most of the injuries at school take place there. Injuries on the playground occur during lunch break, and also before and after school (Squelch and Bray, 1996: 198). The playground is also seen as risky for primary school learners (Gilham & Thomson, 2006:62). The risk of playground injuries is also greater in schools that do not have properly designed and demarcated playground areas. Playground equipment should be selected with learner safety in mind and it must therefore be inspected repeatedly for damage that could result in injuries (Duke, 2002:181).

Learners are playful and are not always able to anticipate the possible consequences for their actions (Marotz et al., 2007:179). They just do anything where-ever and whenever they feel like. As such, learners suffer cuts from broken bottles and other dangerous objects to their bare feet. The great number of serious injuries suffered by these learners in the playground in no way deters them from playing on these grounds because, as observed by Prinsloo and Beckman (2005:122), children are more imprudent and less able to restrain their impulses than adults. Playground hazards challenge teachers to supervise learners even outside the classrooms.

Squelch and Bray (1996:198) argue that, although the playground may be safe, the games learners play may involve some danger. It is important in any given situation to consider certain aspects of supervision required. Sufficient supervision by educators during breaks will eliminate and minimise injuries. According to Bucher and Krotee (2003:357), accidents occur in a variety of situations, but the most hazardous areas include the playground.

#### **2.5.4 School sport**

School sport is a critical area of concern because the possibility of personal injury is very high. Squelch and Bray (1996:200) contend that taking part in school sport, especially in contact sports, can be very dangerous to learners. Learners expose themselves to possible injuries. It is assumed that an individual takes a certain risk when engaging in various games and sports.

According to Bucher and Krotee (2003:358) risks are inherent in sport and even the safest programmes can never prevent accidents and injuries. Sport is the act of voluntarily and visibly exposing oneself to the risk of pursuing a high standard of performance achievement for the sake of fun. These risks include the potential for death or permanent disability.

When a person takes part in sport, he or she exposes himself or herself to injuries that are normal incidents of the game played within its rules (Prinsloo & Beckman, 2005:151). According to Bucher and Krotee (2003:360), learner injuries in sports occur when playground or gymnasium equipment is defective when learners attempt to exercise. Mueller and Ryan (2001:48) state that in athletic events involving impact, a number of factors can contribute to injury.

In sport, one must use protective equipment in order to reduce the risks which are inherent in certain sporting codes, for an example, the risk of leg and arm injuries in soccer. The other purpose of using protective equipment in sports is to prevent or

minimise injuries resulting from accidental or routine impacts. Learners play soccer most of the time without proper protective equipment resulting in injuries. Shin and ankle guards are used in soccer for protective purposes. Significant dangers in many sports have been minimised by the advent of the helmets. The risk of facial injury could then be addressed as well because it is difficult to put a shield or mask over the face and eyes without a helmet. By so doing, these injuries have indeed been minimised (Bucher & Krotee, 2003:373).

#### **2.5.5 School journeys**

Squelch and Bray (1996:201) maintain that school journeys and outings, which may range from one day to several weeks, form a valuable part of an educational programme. However, with each trip there is an element of risk involved. According to Marotz et al., (2007:198) excursions away from school premises can be an exciting part of learners' educational experiences but they require special precautions to be taken. When outings are to be undertaken, specific rules should be laid down in respect to point assembly, time of meeting and orderliness of forming up (Prinsloo & Beckman, 2005:157).

#### **2.5.6 School transport**

Molokela (2003:22) believes that the transport of learners should be entrusted only to competent, sober and reliable persons. She argues that there is always a possibility of danger when learners are being transported and it is the duty of the teacher in charge to inform the learners of the dangers involved in unruly conduct.

Squelch and Bray (1996:157) contend that the teacher who is driving learners is responsible for ensuring that the transport is roadworthy and that it complies with road ordinances. A teacher is still responsible for learners in a bus even if he or she is not driving. Prinsloo and Beckman (2005:157) contend that vehicles used for the transportation of learners should meet all the necessary requirements and specifications applicable to road safety.



Societal influence, poverty, lack of morality, peer pressure and conflict resolution will be discussed in the next section under social and societal influences on school safety and security.

## **2.6 SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Some of factors conducive to the lack of safety and security of learners at school include aspects such as societal influence, poverty, lack of morality, and peer group pressure (Basset, 2001:41).

### **2.6.1 Societal influence**

Research on learner conduct in primary schools has suggested that the incidents of learner violence that result in lack of safety and security of learners, are merely the reflection of dysfunctional families and lack of parental involvement (HRC, 2008:16). According to De Wet (2003:90), a relatively large percentage of respondents rated unemployment and the disintegration of family life as important causes of learners' poor behaviour.

### **2.6.2 Poverty**

Another contributing factor to lack of safety of security of learners at schools is poverty (HRC, 2008:17-18). Poverty has a disempowering effect on children and plays a significant role in the cultivation of violent means that lead to lack of safety and security at school. Poverty inhibits the ability to escape a cycle of exclusion and destitution and it can be an obstacle to accessing essential services that are vital to overcoming the barriers created by poverty.

### **2.6.3 Lack of morality**

The core problem facing schools today could be seen to be a moral dilemma since many other problems could originate from a lack of morality. Duke (2002:41) contends that cultural differences between learners from diverse backgrounds could cause serious misunderstandings and conflicts that could lead to lack of safety and security of learners at schools.

### **2.6.4 Peer group pressure**

According to Xaba (2006:570), peer group pressure can be described as the influence exercised by people within the same age group. Adults generally take it for granted that peer group pressure exercised on youth will inevitably be negative in its influence (Duke, 2002:108).

### **2.6.5 Conflict resolution**



In general, being able to handle conflict requires the ability to manage special social skills. It therefore follows that not many learners would know how to handle conflict in an appropriate manner. The inability to communicate frustrations could result in anger and violence (Basset, 2001:41). In the final analysis, Duke (2002:104) is of the opinion that learners could manage to acquire the skill of reacting positively to incidents of conflicts, if these were to occur within the confines of a caring school community.

In the next section, under strategies to enhance safe and secure schools, the following will be discussed: discipline in the school, collaboration between parent communities and schools, promote values and reduce overcrowding.

## **2.7 STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS**

### **2.7.1 Discipline in the school**

According to SASA (1996, Section 7), discipline must be maintained in the school and the classroom to ensure that the education of learners proceeds without disruptive behaviour and offence. The disciplinary processes must be expeditious, fair, just, consistent, corrective and educative. Where possible, parents should be informed and involved in the correction of a learner's behaviour. Adults or other learners should protect learners from abuse. One of the goals of discipline is to provide a safe and secure environment for learners and educators (Prinsloo & Beckman, 2005:210).

Discipline is about positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviour and developing self-discipline and self-control in learners (Squelch, 2001:2). He identified the following factors that are essential for a disciplined school: effective leadership; clear communication; good planning by educators and education managers; shared values; and positive ethos.

In a well-disciplined school, there are rules, policies and procedures that are followed where everyone realises the implications and consequences of breaking the rules. A school's code of conduct is a lawful way of limiting the fundamental rights of everyone involved. A learner's rights and freedom cannot justify any misconduct of such a learner. The interests and welfare of co-learners and the educators at a school must be balanced against the rights of a learner, and in some case may override the rights of an individual learner (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001). In the context of South African schooling, discipline is often understood more narrowly as punishment. Many mistakenly equate discipline with punishment. According to Wanko (2001:196), the prevalence and gravity of disciplinary problems in schools is a universal concern.

Stevens et al., (2001:121) state that, when positive school rules are imperative for schools to be effective, it is also necessary to have both punishment and corrective

discipline for those who break the rules and disrupt school activities. Furthermore, they say that, with an increasing emphasis on the protection of basic human rights and on the need to protect children against harsh and cruel treatment, attitudes towards discipline and punishment need to change. Denying learners access to equal educational opportunities should be the last resort that schools use to discipline learners. It is important to be consistent when disciplining learners. Moloi (2005:2), in her research related to school discipline, discovered that many learners no longer nurture a culture of respect for, and trust in their educators.

Burton (2008:77) suggests that all schools should join hands in enhancing the safety and security of learners. He points out that schools should endeavour to combine their efforts, and act as a coherent unit in order to reduce the lack of safety and security of learners at schools.

### **2.7.2 Collaboration between parent communities and schools**

In 1999, the then Minister of Education stated that public schools should become centres of community life (Asmal, 1999). The ideal behind this statement was to promote collaboration and discourse between local communities and schools. Parents should help to develop a positive school climate where educators and learners are trusted, respected and involved.

### **2.7.3 Promote values**

At the basis of promoting values, lie the values taught at school. According to De Klerk and Rens (2003:355-357), the history of humankind has proven that the existence of civilisation is more dependent on the quality of their morality than on scientific standards. Duke (2002:41-43) maintains that the variances in the levels of safety and security of learners at schools may be a function of cultural differences between learners from different backgrounds.

#### **2.7.4 Reduce overcrowding**

Overcrowding in classrooms causes competition among learners for physical space and resources and the competition often seems to exacerbate or even create hostility among learners. In addition, large classes make the maintenance of safety and security a far more difficult task for educators (HRC, 2008:33).

Under effective management of school policy as a measure of ensuring safety and security of learners in the school, the following will be discussed in the next section: safety policy for the school, Code of Conduct of learners, and liability of educators.

### **2.8 EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL POLICY AS A MEASURE OF ENSURING SAFETY AND SECURITY OF LEARNERS IN THE SCHOOL**

Duke (2002:80) contends that in order for the safety and security of learners in the school to be achieved, a school must have a “safety and security policy” which directs management and decisions on the issues of safety and security. Duke (2002:81) further postulates that for a positive climate at school, policies on safety should be sought to improve school safety and reduce school crime. Furthermore, he argues that in the US, punitive programmes that demonstrated significant effects on school safety have failed, and thus the safety policy was the alternative to facilitating and enhancing a positive school climate.

#### **2.8.1 Safety Policy for the school**

For the school to effectively ensure the safety and security of learners and other stakeholders, it is imperative that the school should have a safety and security policy. In order for the safety and security of the school community to be ensured, certain matters need to be addressed by the SMT and the SGB of the school. The SMT should enforce the safety and security policy in the school. Protection of the school community inside the school premises means that the school grounds need to be secure so that the strangers

do not have access. A building and ground maintenance plan should be in place so that environment is safe and secure. All people entering and leaving the school premises should be monitored. The carrying of dangerous weapons on the school premises should be prevented. Dangerous and deviant behaviour such as bullying, fighting, sexual harassment, and also physical and sexual abuse should be eliminated and be dealt with as far as possible. First aid procedures should be in place in the event of accidents. Evacuation procedures should be in place in the event of any fire or bomb threat. The school should have an excursion policy so that the safety and security of learners during outings should be ensured. Procedures for the supervision of learners during break, when educators are absent, or during a school function, should be in place (Khwezi Lomso Comprehensive School, 2010).

### **2.8.2 Code of Conduct of learners**

According to Section 1 of SASA (1996), every school must develop its own Code of Conduct for learners. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to promote positive discipline, self-discipline and exemplary conduct as learners learn by observation and experience. All key stakeholders should be committed to the Code of Conduct despite its being directed specifically at learners. The Code of Conduct must suit the development of learners and be appropriate to the different school levels. Its language must be easily understandable and content accessible. Its format must be user friendly. A Code of Conduct should contain a set of moral values, norms and principles, which the school community should uphold.

The creation of a Code of Conduct for learners as prescribed by the Section 8 of SASA (1996) is the most preventative disciplinary measure. It says that punishment is a corrective measure applied to an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain an orderly society in the school. Maree (2000:8) suggests the drawing up of written and workable school codes and rules as a first and foremost recommendation. This will ensure that learners know exactly what kind of conduct is expected.

### **2.8.3 The liability of educators**

Although teachers have a duty to supervise learners before, during and after school, they cannot be on duty for 24 hours a day and therefore they cannot be held liable for every injury suffered by learners. According to Oosthuizen et al. (2003:85), an educator can only be held liable for damages if the educator had a legal duty to act cautiously and he or she breaches this duty in an unreasonable and guilty manner.

#### **2.8.3.1 What is liability?**

According to Marotz et al. (2007:199), the term liability refers to the legal obligations and responsibilities, especially those related to safety, that are accepted by administrators, teachers and caregivers when they agree to care for learners. Failure to carry out these duties in an acceptable manner is regarded as negligence.

#### **2.8.3.2 Requirements for delictual liability**

For educators to be delictually liable with regard to the safety and security of learners, all five elements of a delict must be present, namely: conduct, wrongfulness, fault, causation and damage (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001:98).

#### **2.8.3.3 Conduct**

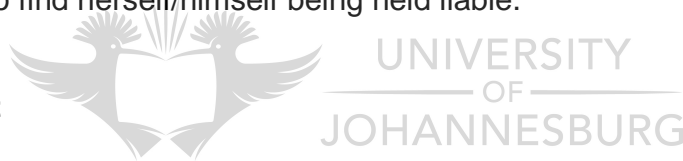
Conduct may be described as a general prerequisite for delictual liability (Neethling, Potgieter & Visser, 2006:27). Van der Walt (1999:57) agrees that some of conduct on the part of the defendant is a requisite for delictual liability. Educators are bound by law to perform certain duties, which include the supervision of learners. For an example, if an educator leaves learners alone in a science laboratory or in a swimming pool, he/she may be held liable for their conduct. Educators should always be watchful and careful of their conduct before, during and after school to avoid being liable. Educators should therefore

take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of learners (Educators' Labour Relation Act (ELRA) 1996, Section 3).

#### **2.8.3.4 Wrongfulness**

According to The Concise Oxford Dictionary, wrongful refers to acts or deeds, which are contrary to the law. All children are protected by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). Infringing on their rights is a wrongful act. An act may be described as delictually wrongful only when it has as its consequence, factual infringement of an individual interest (Neethling et al., 1999:35). Educators are required to avoid wrongful conduct which would result in a learner being injured and educators themselves being held liable. For example, it would be wrong for an educator to allow a learner to take home a science project without properly determining exactly what chemical substances the learner had used. This could be dangerous to the learner and to those at home. The educator could also find herself/himself being held liable.

#### **2.8.3.5 Fault**



Neethling et al., (1999:119) describe fault as a general requirement for delictual liability. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2001:99), fault refers to the blameworthy attitude or conduct of someone who has acted wrongfully. If a teacher allows a learner to use faulty equipment and this result in injury, the teacher must be held liable. Had the teacher examined the equipment first, he or she would have not allowed the learner to use that equipment.

#### **2.8.3.6 Causation**

Burchell (2003:114) asserts that, even if the defendant's conduct has been proved to be unlawful and negligent, the court must prove that his or her conduct was the cause of the harm suffered by the plaintiff. Educators may be liable if found to have been the cause of the injury.



### **2.8.3.7 Damages**

Squelch and Bray (1996:194) contend that in order for a person to receive an award for damages, he or she must have suffered an injury from the negligent conduct of the defendant. Joubert and Prinsloo (2001:99) identify damages as money and injury to accidents of learners.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa makes a provision for children's rights whereby children are protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. A public school is therefore not exempted from complying with the provisions of any applicable law. The system of school governance enables the SGB to take specific regulatory and policy measures to improve the safety and security of learners at schools. An educator has a legal duty towards the safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the school. Educators also have to supervise learners in classes and in the playgrounds in order to minimise the injuries. Schools must have the safety and security policies in order to ensure the safety and security of learners in the school premises.

## **2.10 SUMMARY**

Chapter Two has presented the legislative framework for learner safety and security in schools, the basis of educators' duty regarding the safety and security of learners, the importance of learner supervision as an aspect of safety and security of learners at school, aspects of a provision of a safe and secure environment, strategies to enhance the safe and secure schools, management of school policy as a measure of ensuring the safety and security of learners in the school, and the liability of educators. In Chapter Three, data will be collected, population and sample will be selected and random sampling will also be used.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two, the focus was on the literature review of the concepts within the topic and scope of the study. This study seeks to explore the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. This chapter explains the research design, research methodology, instruments and data collection strategies, and finally the process of data collection.

Stone, O' Reilly and Brown (2000: 192) make a succinct point when they write that the safety and security of learners at schools is totally the responsibility of teachers. However, society sees teachers as being *in loco parentis*. The teacher is, in effect, another parent to each child and the parents are regarded as having delegated their powers of control and supervision to the teacher. Thus SGBs, as parents, and the teachers' involvement in the measures concerning the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school is imperative.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Mouton (2001:55) regards research design as a plan or blueprint dealing with how one intends conducting a research. There are many types of research design such as phenomenology and grounded theory, but for the purpose of this study, the case study design was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school (Merriam, 1998:19).

The interest of this design is in the process rather than in the outcomes, in context rather than specific variables, in discovery rather than confirmation (Merriam, 1998:19).

Furthermore, cases are bounded by time and activity (Creswell, 2003:15). According to Babbie (2007:53), a case study requires a single informant and the researcher. In other words, a case study research is based on the participatory relationship between the researcher and another person.

Case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative research designs in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system (Merriam, 1998:19). Furthermore, Merriam (1998:29) contends that case studies are characterised as being particularistic, descriptive and heuristic. Particularistic means that case studies focus on a particular phenomenon (the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school). The case itself is important for what it reveals about the phenomenon and for what it might represent. This specificity of focus makes it an especially good design for practical problems or questions or occurrences arising from everyday practice. Descriptive means that the end product of a case study is a rich “thick” description of the phenomenon under the study. Heuristic means that case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under the study. They can bring about the discovery of a new meaning, extend the reader’s experience, or confirm what is known.

### **3.2.1 Unit of analysis**

The researcher’s unit of analysis (and the social phenomenon to be investigated) is the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The focus is an insider-perspective to understand the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. Bless et al., (2006:72) postulate that the unit of analysis is the person or object from whom the social researcher collects data. The data from such a unit can describe that unit. However, Mouton (2006:51) states, “the unit of analysis refers to the *what* of the study,” namely the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. According to Bless et al., (2006:73), in social research studies, the unit of analysis is an individual person. Furthermore, when a social science study deals with social

research, group of people and individuals, like in this study, the units of analysis can differ in terms of subject matter.

The researcher used the qualitative research method to understand the subject matter of the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, in the context-specific settings such as the primary school that was selected for data collection. Because the study occurred in a naturalistic setting, the researcher did not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon (the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school) of interest. In this study, the reality or real word setting (lived experience of the research participants) are intersected to gain relevant and vital knowledge. This knowledge is necessary to achieve the purpose of understanding, explaining and interpreting the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.

### **3.2.2 Population and sampling**

All 15 primary schools in the Sasolburg-area make up the research population, but only one school was purposively sampled from the broader population. This school formed the subset of the population, which is being actually investigated, and its characteristics were generalised to the entire population. Babbie (2007:190) contends that a study population is that aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. Since qualitative research focuses on process, meaning and understanding, the product of qualitative study is richly descriptive. "Words and pictures (rather than numbers), are used to convey what the researcher has learned about the phenomenon" (Merriam, 1998:8). Sample selection in qualitative research is usually (but not always) non-random, purposive and small as opposed to the larger more random sampling of quantitative research, therefore the researcher randomly selected twelve educators from the participating school. According to Babbie (2007:72), the samples are examined in order to create summary descriptions of all such units and to explain differences among them.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research is a systematic enquiry or investigation of phenomena to discover or revise facts, theories or application. It is a process of using guidelines enabling the researcher to make broad and accurate generalizations of contextualised exploration and description of the phenomenon. There are two known research methods that are used by researchers, namely, quantitative and qualitative research. This study employs the qualitative research method and design.

Qualitative research method is seen as an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry, which includes the case study that helps one to understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with little disruption of the natural setting as possible (Merriam, 1998:5). According to Patton (2002:39), a naturalistic approach seeks to understand the phenomena in the context-specific settings such as “real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest”. Strauss and Myburgh (2005:17) define qualitative research broadly as “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification”. The primary goal of this study for using this approach is defined as investigating and gaining an in depth understanding rather than explaining human behaviour.

The researcher used the inductive process as observations were made on particular events or on a phenomenon in a situation, then based on these observed events, inferences were made about the whole process. According to Merriam (1998:6), it can be said that the “reality is constructed by individuals interacting within their social worlds”. Strauss and Myburgh (2005:101) concur that qualitative research is a multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. In other words, the researcher uses the qualitative method to study educators and SMT members to collect data

in their natural settings (the schools where they teach and manage). Then the researcher attempts to make sense of, or interprets the meanings that the educators and SMT members make of their setting on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, and its impact on the educators' professional progression and parenthood.

Merriam (1998:6-7) contends that qualitative research methodology has a number of characteristics. Researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed in their world, how they make sense of their world in a specific setting, (embedded experiences are not the researcher's perceptions). Researchers are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis where data has been mediated through the human instrument rather than a questionnaire or computer. It involves fieldwork as the researcher physically goes to the people in their setting or field to observe their behaviour in their natural setting. It employs an inductive strategy and builds on abstractions, concepts, hypotheses or theories rather than on existing theory. Researchers build towards theory from observations and intuitive understandings gained in the field.

In the context of this research, the social phenomenon investigated is the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The researcher used the qualitative research method in order to investigate and understand the phenomenon in the context of specific settings such as the primary school that was selected for the data collection. The study took place in the natural setting and the researcher did not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon (the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school) of interest.

By using the qualitative approach, the researcher has attempted to understand the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, from the subjective perspectives and meanings of the individuals involved. The inductive process was used to observe particular events on the phenomena in a work situation. Based on these observed events, inferences were made about the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.

Merriam (1998:6) contends that individuals interacting with their social worlds construct reality. According to Strauss and Myburgh (2005:101), qualitative research is multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter.

The researcher has used the qualitative research method to study the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school, in the natural settings of educators and to interpret the meanings made by educators, SMTs and SGBs. Furthermore, qualitative research method allows the researcher to obtain the educators' own definition of the safe and secure school. Patton (2002:39) maintains that the significance of the qualitative research method lies in producing findings from real-world settings where the phenomena of interest unfold naturally and are not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or any other means of quantification.

### **3.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

The following data collection techniques were used in this study:

A literature survey was conducted to provide a theoretical framework. The purpose of the literature review is to share with the readers the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported (Creswell, 2003:29). The researcher also benefits from it by creating a specific attitude and practices certain skills (Strauss & Myburgh, 2005:30). The literature review also formed Chapter Two of this research study.

This study utilised qualitative interviews as a means of data gathering aimed at gathering the lived experiences of the respondents. According to Seidman (1998:3), the purpose of interviewing is the interest in understanding the experiences of other people and the meaning they make of their experiences. Merriam (1998:72) contends that interviews are done to find out from people about the things that researchers cannot directly observe. One cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. The purpose of interviews is to allow researchers to enter into another person's perspectives. The interview schedule was unstructured with open-ended questions. The interviewees were also given a voice on how the phenomenon the problem of safety and security in managing effective

teaching and learning in the primary school manifests itself. The permission was obtained from Free State Education Department and all the interviews were audio-taped.

Focus group interviews with SMTs and educators educating in the participating school were conducted. The researcher conducted group interviews in the context of the school life of the SMTs and educators on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The SGBs were also interviewed together with the educators. This enabled the researcher to observe meaningful and understandable aspects of the experiences of the SMTs and educators. Without context, Patton (2002:102) postulates that there is a little possibility of exploring the meaning of an experience. According to Creswell (2003:220), in qualitative data collection, purposive sampling is used so that individuals are selected because they have experienced the central phenomenon. Interviews were conducted until data saturation occurred. This means that further interviews would not provide new and usable information concerning the lived experiences of the respondents.

Field notes concerning the researcher's experiences and observations were also taken and form part of the data. This ensures triangulation of data. Triangulation of data is necessary because it perceives value in demonstrating rigour. Triangulation addresses the internal validity by using different data sources of information to answer a research question (Creswell, 2003:196). According to Barbour (2001:1115), it sounds feasible to combine observational fieldwork and interviews or focus group in order to gain a broader view.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Collected data was interpreted for the purpose of drawing conclusions that would reflect the interest, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry. The researcher analysed the data using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998:151). Data collection and analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research (Merriam, 1998:151).



Analysis began at the first observation, first interview and after the first documents relevant to the study had been read. Emerging insights and hunches directed the next phase of data collection, which lead to the refinement or reformulation of research questions where applicable. This process allowed the researcher to produce the believable and trustworthy findings (Merriam, 1998:151).

When saturation of data occurred while interviewing, refinement of the analysis of the interviews and field notes began. Materials collected from the same themes were categorised. A comparison of the categories was made and the researcher looked for variations and nuances in meaning. Furthermore, comparisons between the different categories were made to find connections between themes. This process allowed the researcher to find additional themes and concepts, which helped to build the final explanation of, and answers to the objectives.

### **3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

To ensure trustworthiness in this inquiry, the researcher used the strategies recommended by Creswell (2003:196), such as triangulation of different data source of information, by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for them. The researcher used member checking to determine the accuracy of qualitative findings through taking the final report or themes back to participants. The researcher determined whether the participants felt that they were accurate. Rich and thick descriptions to convey the findings were used. This transported readers to the setting and gave the discussion an element of shared experiences. The researcher clarified bias brought to the study. The researcher believed that self-reflection created an open and honest narrative that resonated well with readers. Furthermore, negative or discrepant information was also presented, because real life is composed of different perspectives that do not always coalesce. The researcher spent considerable time in the field at school with educators. In this way, the researcher developed an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and could convey details about the site and the people that lent credibility to the narrative account. This process involved locating

a person (a peer debriefer) who reviewed and asked questions about the qualitative study so that the account would resonate with people other than the researcher.

### **3.6.1 Validity and Reliability**

The aim of this research is to produce a valid and a reliable knowledge that can be used to help other researchers or the general population to understand the phenomenon: the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. According to Merriam (1998:198), for research to be trustworthy, validity and reliability must be accounted for. Validity and Reliability are the two concepts that provide assurance that this research instrument is capable of providing accurate and meaningful answers to the research questions.

#### **3.6.1.1 Validity**

The validity of an instrument detects the ability of that instrument to evaluate what is supposed to be evaluated. Stake (1995:92) contends that validity deals with the notion that what one says is what one has observed, is in fact, what really happened. Furthermore, he says that validity is always about the truth. The concept of truth is a complex issue in qualitative research.

#### **3.6.1.2 Reliability**

Reliability in its various manifestations is about the matter of accuracy (Stake, 1995:91). Reliability can be described as the degree of consistency or stability of data through the focus group interviews. According to Conrad and Serlin (2006:412), findings are reliable when other researchers using the same approach, achieve the same results.

### **3.6.2 Credibility**

It is an alternative method that allows quality to prevail in qualitative research study. This refers to the accountability of the entire research process. According to Strauss and

Myburgh (2005:178), credibility includes: the actions in preparation for the field research, authority of the researcher, keeping a reflexive journal, participants' control of the data, and peer group evaluation. This qualitative research study is credible as the researcher interpreted the experiences of the respondents in their natural setting accurately. Patton (2002:215) adds to this statement by asserting that credibility is obtained from findings of the research as authentic experiences, as lived and experienced by respondents. Therefore, credibility demonstrates that in this study the subjects were accurately identified and described.

### **3.7 RESEARCH ETHICS AND ETHICAL STANDARDS**

It is important that this research be based on ethical standards. Whenever human beings are the focal area to any type of investigation, several ethical issues require careful consideration. These are guidelines that alert, "researchers to the ethical dimensions of their work" (Merriam, 1998:212). The researcher was wary of publishing information which could cause personal anguish. The researcher made sure that she respected the respondents' right to privacy and if they declared information in confidence, this information was deemed confidential.

According to Merriam (1998:214), "qualitative researchers are guests in a private space of the world, where manners should be good and their code of ethics strict." This means that the researcher needed to respect the rights, the needs, the values and the desires of the participants. The researcher made certain that some questions did not embarrass the participants. Participants did not reveal the information that they did not intend to reveal (Merriam, 1998:214).

The ethical issues in this research take cognisance of the following categories, namely, protection from harm, informed consent, the right to privacy and honesty with the participants (Leedy & Ormond, 2005:101). The participants willingly and knowingly participated in this research study. A comprehensive description was provided in writing, of the envisaged purpose and scope of the study.

The researcher conducted a session with the participants where a clear explanation of the research was given. The participants submitted the written consent forms before the interview process started. The participants were first briefed verbally on the study and then the person-to-person and the focus group interview process followed. The researcher ensured that the participants' identities were protected during the research. Confidentiality was maintained and to do this, pseudonyms were used.

The researcher adhered to the ethical principles laid down by the standards set by the University of Johannesburg (2002).

These are:

1. the right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity;
2. the right to equality, human dignity and protection against harm;
3. the right to freedom of choice, expression and access to information;
4. harmful information will be disclosed if there is any to participants;
5. informed consent will be obtained from participants in writing with clear indication that they could at any stage request termination of the interview;
6. participants will not be coerced to participate or harassed because they refuse to participate in the interviews;
7. participant's right to withdraw or terminate with participation in the study at any time will be acknowledged; and
8. the research study will not use the language that is biased against the persons because of their gender, racial group, disability and age.

These ethical aspects are also in accordance with the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the qualitative research method and design were presented concerning the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The researcher then discussed the design that was implemented. The

data collection included the literature survey, interviews and field notes. The analysis techniques used in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the Republic of South Africa and the University of Johannesburg. It was important that the results of this research were reliable and the techniques used were valid. Trustworthiness of this research study was also discussed in this chapter. In the following chapter, the data is presented, analysed and interpreted.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. In the literature review in Chapter Two, an attempt was made to learn and understand the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. This phenomenon that has been selected, provided a lens to guide firstly what issues are important to examine the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. Secondly who was selected as informants in the empirical investigation. This phenomenon also enabled the researcher to indicate how it positions itself ontologically (in reality) and epistemologically (knowledge-based). In this research study, the researcher has written the final accounts of the investigation. It also allowed the researcher to define and limit the research problem and to select the appropriate methods for conducting this study.

In Chapter Three, the research design and methodology used in this study were discussed and explained. It was made clear that in order to gain the data needed for this study, a qualitative research method is vital, as the researcher has attempted to describe and understand the educators' perceptions of the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. Further reasons for adopting this approach were explained in Chapter Three. The researcher justified the research design and methodology in terms of the research problem and the literature review.

## **4.2 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of data collected (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008:96). It is a link between the sub-processes of data reduction, data display and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, it is a process attempted by the researcher to summarise the data collected in a dependable and accurate manner and it is a process based on induction.

### **4.2.1 Inductive analysis**

An inductive process of analysis was applied in this research study as observations were made on the setting and on educators in the research situation. Then, on the basis of these observed events, inferences were made about the whole process. This process involves the organisation of data into categories and identifies the relationships within these categories or themes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2000:519). The intent of the inductive analysis process is to allow the research findings to develop from the themes derived from the mass of raw data received. The most important themes are sometimes hidden because of the preconceptions the researcher might have while collecting and analysing raw data. Therefore, it is very significant for the researcher to read and re-read the collected data so that valuable information will not be lost.

The following inductive process was used in this study to collect, identify and clarify the raw data. As it was stated in Chapter Three, data was collected through unstructured interviews with open-ended questions. Field notes were used by the researcher to supplement the researcher's findings and observations. The interview schedule is included as Appendix C. The researcher drew from the experiences of the educators, the SMT members and SGBs of the school being researched in Sasolburg area. The interviews were transcribed immediately and codes were given to each transcript.

#### 4.2.2 Analysis and design

It is the reduction of the raw data as stated in the above paragraph. The analytical approach chosen in this research study involves a detailed description of the settings, analysis of the data for themes, patterns and issues that emerge (Stake, 1995:123). The first step of the analytical process according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008:102) is to consider the themes and then dissect and classify the data into categories. These categories or themes are the concepts indicated by the data and not the data itself (Merriam, 1998:179). Data is reduced into manageable workloads by developing a coding system whereby the data is distilled into smaller sets. The coding system set out below was used in this study.

Table 4.1: Coding system

CATEGORY Or THEMES	CODE
Safe and secure school	sss
School safety policy	ssp
Security guards	sg
Level of learners' supervision	lls
School uniform	su
Sports training sessions	sts
School environment	se
First Aid	fa

This coding system notes the interest and significance under control in the data that is now being organised.



### **4.2.3 Data verification and validation**

Verification involves the researcher's interpretation, inferring meanings and drawing conclusions from the data collected. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:24), the process of verification involves comparing data, noting the patterns and themes, noting the contrast visible, clustering of themes, following up on surprises, and checking the results with the respondents. This ensures triangulation, which strengthens reliability and internal validity (Merriam, 1998:207).

Validation in this research study included the checking of questioning and interpretation of the research findings. This is a way of verifying the reliability and the precision of the research process. It entails checking for any bias that can steal into the process of drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994:438). In the analysis of the research document, the procedures and decisions applied in the research process were evaluated, reviewed and referred to the aims of the research study.

### **4.3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

In Table 4.1, the data was classified into categories using codes to group similar themes together. The following themes were identified and also used in this research study:

1. Safe and secure school;
2. School safety policy;
3. Security guards;
4. Level of learners' supervision;
5. School uniforms;
6. Sports training sessions;
7. School environment; and
8. First Aid.

#### 4.3.1 The definition of a safe and secure school

The first question from the interview was “What is your understanding of a safe and secure school?” All the respondents had to indicate their perception of a safe and secure school. Some of their responses are set out below.

*”A safe and secure school is a school free of injuries, hazardous objects that will harm learners, educators and visitors, but here at our school, learners are still getting injured, there are still objects that can harm learners like broken bottles in their playground.”*

*“In my opinion, a safe school entails a school environment whereby safety and security of learners is the major priority. In other words, all measures ensure that learners are not exposed to anything that may cause physical harm to them.*

*A secure school on the other side focuses mainly on the physical aspects of the school premises, for an example, does the school have secure gates and fencing? Are all the gates always locked? Are there burglary doors at the offices? In my opinion, our school sometimes exposes learners to things that can cause their physical harm because one can find broken glasses, stones and wires lying outside sometimes.”*

*“I can say a safe and secure school is a school with ehhr, which has school rules so that if there is anything that can happen at school, learners must know where to run to, and if there are school rules, learners will know if this happens, we must do this.”*

*“Okay, a safe and secure school is a school whereby umh, both learners and educators are free from any form of injury.”*

*“Ehrr, a safe and secure school has a solid fence that surrounds the school and gates are always closed. Learners are not supposed to get out of the school premises except after school when they are going home.”*

From these responses, it can be assumed that there is problem of safety and security at the school sampled for this investigation because learners are being exposed to things that could be of physical harm to them because there are sometimes broken glasses, stones and wires lying outside. In most responses it shows that learners are getting injured while in the school premises.

#### **4.3.2 School safety policy**

This category emerged as a theme from the literature review and it was subsequently also mentioned by the respondents. According to policy handbook for educators (ELRC) the General Documents (Section 1.3), one of the factors contributing to safe school is effective management and it also states that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment and neglect. The respondents expressed themselves like this on the school safety policy:

*“The safety and security policy is available at a safe and secure school because it guides the school on safety matters.”*

*“There are some policies that we need to acquaint ourselves with when talking about a safe school. The policies like the school safety policy must be available in the office as it guides the school on safety and security of learners and the learners Code of Conduct must also be available at school.”*

*“The safety policy is always available to every educator and it is always communicated to learners so that it also becomes effective for the safety and security of learners.”*

*“Ehrr, I think the safety policy plays the most vital role in a safe and secure school because it ensures the safety and security of learners and educators even of visitors. It will always help in identifying the possible hazards and helps on minimising the risks.”*

*“The bell ringing must appear on the safety policy because it is the way of communicating with learners and educators. I think the school policy must be communicated with the educators and learners together, learners must understand it.”*

*“A safe and secure school must have a safety policy that ensures the safety and security of learners. This safety policy proves that safety is not the result of luck or magic, but the consequence of reflection, careful planning a function of thought and effort. It is, however, hard to imagine a cause more deserving for our thought and effort than safety and wellbeing or our learners.”*

From the responses, the school safety policy seems to play an important role on ensuring the safety and security of learners at school. It was said that the safety policy also helps to minimise the risks at school. As it was encapsulated by Kwezi Lomso Comprehensive School (2010) a school must have a safety and security policy in hand to reduce learner injuries.

#### **4.3.3 Security guards**

What is your view on the school having security guards?

Most of the respondents had similar views on the concept of security guards.

*“There is a security guard at the gate to monitor the in and out movement of everyone coming into the school premises to make it a point that the school is safe and secure.”*

*"A security guard must always be there to prevent criminals from entering the school premises. A security guard must make it a point that the gates are always closed and they must open the gates only when there are visitors entering the school premises."*

*"A safe and secure school has security guards. The security guards control gates at all the times in the safe and secure school, even after school hours, but here at our school, gates are always wide open and we do not have a security guard."*

*"There is always a security guard at the gate to prevent the wrong elements from entering the school premises."*

*"At the gates there are security guards who are always there for twenty four hours. Here at our school we do not have a security guard but we used to have one in the past years."*

*"The gates of that school are always closed and they are always being monitored by a security guard."*

*"Security guards are always at their points to protect the school."*

*"A safe and secure school is a school that has security guards and the gates in such a school are always closed. Learners do not leave the school premises except after school."*

It is obvious that there is no security guard at the gate because most respondents said their school does not have a security guard, though some said there is a security guard. The security guard are supposed to monitor the in and out movement of everyone at school.

#### 4.3.4 Level of learners' supervision

How are educators at your school involved in supervising learners?

The level of supervision provided to learners is one of the most definitive aspects of learners' injuries. According to Prinsloo and Beckman (2005:124), learners require careful supervision and a great responsibility lies on the educators in this regard. Most of the educators are aware that learner supervision plays a serious and significant role in the safety and security of learners at schools and that is why it is imperative for learners to be supervised.

The summary below provides data relating to the respondents' perceptions on the level of learner supervision provided.

*"In a safe and secure school, learners must know where they must play and when to play so that they are always supervised."*

*"Ehrr, educators must supervise learners in classes even in training session for the extra-mural activities but at this school it is only those responsible educators that are supervising learners, but as for others they do not care. It is well known that learner supervision reduces learner injuries and also ensures the safety and security of learners."*

*"A safe and a secure school is a school where educators supervise learners in classes and during breaks. They do not leave learners unattended like some educators are doing at this school. They do not come late for their periods. Educators in such a school supervise learners even in the playground when they are practising for extra-mural activities."*

*"The use of dangerous educational support material like scissors is always supervised because they are and can be dangerous to learners."*

*“According to SASA, educators are compelled to supervise learners during lunch break. Unfortunately the learners enjoy their lunch break on their own without the supervision of their educators.”*

*“After tuition, educators are usually the first to leave the school premises, thus leaving the learners behind in danger of being physically harmed, and this proves lack of supervision by educators.”*

*“When there is no educator in the classrooms, learners do as they please. They are not supervised and therefore their safety and security in the school is compromised. Some educators do as they please. When learners are not supervised they are being endangered. At the same time, when learners are being supervised, unnecessary accidents are avoided.”*

According to Squelch (2006:142), the primary responsibility of teachers is to provide adequate supervision to learners as discussed in 2.4 of this document.

#### **4.3.5 School uniforms**

Do you regard school uniform as important for the safety and security of the learners at school? Motivate your answer.

Some of the respondents responded that the school uniform serves as a safety and security measure for learners who wear it to school.

*“As educators we are also ensuring the safety and security of learners by always preaching to them about the importance of wearing a school uniform. We also have a day in a week when educators wear their uniform with similar colours to those of learners in order to encourage them to wear their uniform always. School uniform helps learners to be identifiable in case of an accident on their way to or from school.”*

*“Learners of a safe and secure school always wear the uniform so that they can be identifiable even when they are outside the school premises in the morning when they come to school, and in the afternoon when they return home.”*

*“The responsible educators always encourage learners to wear school uniform as it helps them to look uniform like a word uniform says. No one can differentiate between the rich and the poor learners because in their uniform, they look the same.”*

*“In a safe and secure school, learners are encouraged to wear a school uniform always. When they are wearing their uniform, they cannot be robbed of their expensive designer label clothes. In the countries like United States of America, learners have been killed because of their expensive designer label clothes.”*

Most of the respondents believe that a school uniform is another measure of safety and security for learners at schools. They say when learners are wearing their uniform, they can be easily identifiable in case of accidents. No one will be able to tell who is from a rich or poor family.

#### **4.3.6 Sports training sessions**

What is the involvement of educators during the sports training sessions?

Some of the respondents responded that some of the educators are not present during the sports training sessions and this endangers the safety and security of learners.

*“Ehhr, during training sessions, educators should not leave learners alone and this ensures that learners do not injure themselves. Few of educators are present when learners are training. When accidents happen, we should be able to give a full report of what has transpired.”*



*"I mean the sporting training sessions like soccer, netball, hockey, athletics and other extra-mural activities. Learners must not be left unattended during those training sessions."*

*"In the sports training sessions, we try to make sure that under no circumstances should learners practise and participate without a warm up. If learners can practise and participate in sport without a warm up, they can injure themselves for an example by pulling their muscles."*

*"They even leave learners alone in the playground during the sports training session and that is dangerous because a learner can get seriously injured in the absence of an educator while in the playground."*

#### **4.3.7 School environment**

How are the educators involved in the environment of the school?

Most of the respondents are convinced that learners must be made aware of the existing dangers in their environment by their educators. Learners must have the skills to cope with those dangers successfully on their own.

*"The environment inside and outside the classrooms are always conducive to learning. Their classrooms are clean and toilets are also clean. The garden does not have poisonous plants that can pose any danger to learners."*

*"The environment is always the one that is conducive to learning. Classrooms are always neat and tidy. The grass of the lawns is always cut so that dangerous objects can be visible."*

*"The environment in such a school is a one that is conducive to learning like the one in our school. The only problem at our school is learners' toilets. They are*

*always smelly because so many learners use them. The garden is beautiful because it is always being maintained. Learners have a tendency to leave papers lying all around after school and if they are not supervised to pick them up, the environment will not be clean.”*

*“In my opinion, a safe school entails a school environment in which the safety of learners is the major priority.”*

Educators must take an active role in developing and maintaining a safe school environment.

#### **4.3.8 First Aid**

Can you comment on the availability of First Aid kit at your school?

Some respondents responded that First Aid was important to them because one would be able to help the learners with their minor injuries. They explained that it did not mean that First Aid would prevent injuries, but it would at least treat them, especially those that need immediate attention. Some responded that they always took their First Aid kit along when going out on school trips.

*“We have a First Aid kit here at our school and it is important to have one, but it is not every educator who has been trained in First Aid. In the event of serious injury on the school premises, learners will only be taken to the doctor or clinic for their health and safety. First Aid educators will only treat minor injuries using gloves. No one must treat blood spillage without wearing gloves. This is not to say the First Aid will prevent injuries, but it will treat injuries that need immediate attention.”*

*“Some of our educators are not trained in First Aid to make sure that they help learners who are injured during school hours and First Aid is very important for injuries.”*

*"We have a First Aid kit here at our school and we also apply First Aid for minor injuries but for most severe ones, learners are taken to the doctor, clinic or hospital."*

*"When there are injuries at our school, we apply First Aid to the injured learners. Our school has educators who are responsible for First Aid. Even though it is not all the educators who are knowledgeable about First Aid, our school has educators who are responsible on First Aid. They are the ones who take care of the injuries because they are trained."*

*"Ehrr, at this school, we also have a First Aid kit that is helping the educators with the learner injuries and I regard it as a very significant feature in the school premises. It is in fact very helpful."*

*"During our excursions, we always take our First Aid kit along because one never knows what will happen on the trip. The First Aid kit helps us a lot in terms of treating learner injuries."*

It is obvious that the school has a First Aid kit but it is not all the educators who are know how to use it.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

From the data that was analysed, respondents revealed their perception of a safe and secure school. It was found that the school has the problem of safety and security because learners are being exposed to things that could be of physical harm to them because there are sometimes broken glasses, stones and wires that are found lying outside. In most responses educators are not taking their duty to supervise learners seriously and enthusiastically. It was discovered that the school safety policy seems to play an important role in ensuring the safety and security of learners at school. It was said that the safety and security policy also helps to minimise the risks at school. It was also

suggested that educators must always supervise learners because supervision plays a serious and significant role in the safety and security of learners at schools. It was believed that a school uniform is another measure of safety and security for learners at schools. The safety and security policy has most of the aspects that emerged from the literature review.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the researcher explained how data was collected and analysed. Qualitative research design was chosen to conduct this research study and therefore the inductive process of analysis was applied. "This process involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that capture relevant characteristics of the documents' content" (Merriam, 1998:160). Observations were made on the setting and educators in the research situation, and then on the basis of these observed incidents, and inferences were drawn.

The next chapter presents the following points: summary of the research study; implications to educational management; literature findings; empirical findings; recommendations; and conclusion.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter Four, data analysis was done. The data analysis revealed the difference in perceptions of educators concerning the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The analysis made it clear that educators perceive that learners' safety and security is being compromised. This is, however, disconcerting as one realises that there is a problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. In this chapter the following will be done:

- an overview of the study will be given;
- implications for educational management will be discussed;
- literature findings will be presented;
- empirical findings will be done;
- recommendations will be made; and
- conclusion will be provided.

#### **5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

Chapter One provided the motivation for the research study and a description of the problem. It outlined the aim of the research, the methodology used and it also clarified certain concepts that were used in this research. Chapter Two focussed on the exposition of the topic of the research study, which is, the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.

The aim of this research study was to explore problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. In order to realise this aim, the

literature review was undertaken and this served as a foundation upon which the research study could be based. The discussion in Chapter Two centred around the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school concerning the following:

- the legislative framework for learners safety and security;
- the basis of educators duty regarding the safety and security of learners;
- the importance of learner supervision as an aspect of the safety and security of learners in schools;
- aspects concerning provision of a safe and secure school environment;
- social and societal influences on the school safety and security
- strategies to enhance safe and secure schools
- availability of school policy as a measure aimed at the safety and security of learners;
- the liability of educators.

The design of the research project was explained in Chapter Three. A description of the empirical investigation was provided. The observation and focus group interviews were done. The course of the research was briefly indicated.

The data was analysed and interpreted in Chapter Four. The coding process was used to generate a description of the setting or themes for analysis. The coding was also used to generate a small number of themes and the meaning of the data was revealed.

### **5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

It is imperative for educational managers to be aware of the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. Even though unintentional, this affects learners at schools and learners are underperforming because of the lack of safety and security at schools. If the correct measures concerning the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary

school can be put in place, our primary schools can do better than they are doing. Literature findings are discussed in the next paragraph.

#### 5.4 LITERATURE FINDINGS

It has become clear from the literature study that the areas discussed below require adequate attention in order to ensure that there is no problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The school policy on school safety and security do contain most of the right aspects that are indicated by the legislative underpinning. It also highlights aspects emerging from the literature review such as school uniform as an aspect of safety and security and the importance of learner supervision as an aspect of safety and security of learners.

- i. **The Legislative framework for learner safety and security:** the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, has been described as one of the most progressive human rights instruments in the world. However, the 2008 reports by SAIRR describe South African schools as the most unsafe in the world.
- ii. **The basis of educators' duty regarding the safety and security of learners:** as in the case of the legal duty of the parent or guardian, there is no certainty regarding the basis of an educator's duty to protect a learner against danger. If this was accepted, it would mean that the educator's delegated legal duty would be no different from the legal duty of the parent or the guardian of the child. The learner needs the mental and psychological protection because the typical child is vulnerable due to his/her immaturity.
- iii. **The importance of learner supervision as an aspect of safety and security of learners at schools:** there is an increased danger when learners are not supervised in the classrooms and playgrounds.
- iv. **Aspects concerning provision of a safe and secure school environment:** learners have the right to a clean and safe environment that is conducive to education. Security of property, well cared for school facilities, school furniture

- and equipment, clean toilet facilities, water and a green environment, absence of harassment in attending the classes and writing tests and examinations, all create an atmosphere that is conducive to education. Many accidents to learners arise from defective premises, or from articles dumped within the confines of the school.
- v. **The social and societal influences on school safety and security:** some of factors conducive to a lack of safety and security of learners at school include the aspects such as societal influence, poverty, lack of morality, and peer group pressure.
  - vi. **Strategies to enhance safe and secure schools:** discipline in the school, is about positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviour and developing self-discipline and self-control in learners. The whole school approach combines efforts made by the whole school. Collaboration between parent communities and schools ensures that schools become centres of community life. Values must be promoted at all costs. And lastly, overcrowding causes learners to compete for physical space.
  - vii. **Availability of school policy as a measure of safety and security of learners:** in order for the safety and security of learners at school to be achieved, a school must have a safety and security policy.
  - viii. **The liability of educators:** although teachers have a duty to supervise learners before, during and after school, they cannot be on duty for 24 hours a day and therefore they cannot be held liable for every injury occurring to learners.

## 5.5 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Two focus group interviews were conducted. The interview questions were posed to investigate the perceptions of educators concerning the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school.



**The findings revealed that during sports training sessions:** some educators are leaving learners alone. Educators are not always present when learners are training and learners are injuring themselves. It is evident that learners are practising without educators and it can be dangerous for the learners to practise alone even though the educators are in the school premises. Educators are not supervising learners during breaks and they have a tendency to leave learners unattended in classes. Educators are also leaving early after school thereby leaving learners unattended after school.

**From the observations:** it could be established that some educators do not do traffic duty and learners are left alone at the scholar patrollers' zone. It is very dangerous for them to be alone there on the streets without the supervision of educators because they could be knocked down by the cars and it can be hit and run. Educators do not always work as a team in some of the activities involving learners. Some of the educators leave learners alone. The school allows the community to use the school for the purposes of sports practise, church services, meetings for political parties and others. They believe that if they allow the community to use the school, the community will always take care of the school, but some of the community members are the ones who vandalise the school. Some vandalism like stealing of electricity cable can stunt learners' safety and security and can also impact negatively on effective teaching and learning.

The data also shows that respondents indicated that overcrowding is a problem because learners always bump into each other during breaks and in the corridors, even when they play, because the playground is too small for them. Bullying is also a problem at their school. Those bullies make others feel unsafe and insecure because they always beat them and take their cases and their lunch boxes by force and even go to the extent of beating them. Bullying leads to learners' depression and anxiety, and this can cause low self esteem and can even lead to suicide. Violence amongst learners has also affected the safety and security of learners in schools.

**Findings also revealed that the playground is full of dangerous objects lying around:** like wires, broken glasses and stones and they can injure learners when they

play in the playground. When learners play on their own without supervision, it affects the safety and security of learners in the school. When there are people working in the school premises, they do not put warning signs in places where they are working. They dig holes without warning educators and learners.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher makes the following recommendations to achieve some measures concerning the lack of safety and security of learners in primary schools and its impact on effective teaching and learning.

- Educators need to perform playground duty in order to minimise learner injuries, it must be clearly stated in the school policy. Educators need to take their duty to supervise learners more seriously and enthusiastically because learners depend on the guidance and supervision of responsible adult, and supervision reduces unnecessary accidents. All educators should receive training on First Aid. Educators and learners should remove any objects that may pose as danger to learners before using the playground. Educators need to know and understand that they may be held liable if an accident occurs because of a variety of contributing factors (Smith, 2007: 149).
- SMTs should take an active role in maintaining a safe school environment. SMTs must see to it that educators serve seven hours a day and do not leave learners alone in the school premises. It is clearly stated in the school policy that all educators have to serve seven hours. SMTs must control the attendance register, this will help because no educator will leave the school premises before seven hours. SMTs must not admit many learners, they must admit the prescribed ratio which is 1:33 in primary schools.
- The Department of Education should see to it that schools are provided with security guards for twenty four hours a day and surveillance cameras to avoid

vandalism. The Department of Education should organise courses and workshops on school safety periodically. The Department of Education should develop safety and security policies which are reinforced through posted warnings.

- The SGBs and the school should arrange a child psychologist to counsel learners who have been traumatised by bullying, violence and etc. The SGBs and the school should work together to arrive to a common understanding of bullying and violence and then use the shared knowledge to develop strategies to counter the behaviour. These include:
  - (a) lack of supervision in the classrooms during school hours;
  - (b) lack of proper instruction; and
  - (c) lack of care with regard to the care of learners.

## **5.7 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY**

This study will help the educators, SMTs and SGBs to realise when learners are endangered because of lack of safety and security in the school premises. It will also make educators to realise that learner supervision in the classrooms, during breaks and in the playgrounds is important as it minimises learner injuries. It will also help the school managers and educators to create the environment conducive to learning so that learners can learn freely without being afraid.

## **5.8 SUMMARY**

When learners are not supervised in the classrooms and in the playgrounds, it poses as danger to learners. Learners have the right to clean and safe environment that is conducive for learning. Discipline in the school promotes appropriate behaviour in learners.

Educators are not always present when learners are training and learners are injuring themselves. Educators are not working as a team in some of the activities involving

learners. Overcrowding is also a problem because learners are always bumping into each other during breaks.

## **5.9 CONCLUSION**

The recommendations above will obviously require careful consideration on the part of all the educational managers and educators interested in reducing learner injuries in schools. One of the research questions was how do educators perceive the safety and security of learners at schools? The findings indicated that many respondents perceived the safety and security of learners at school as being free from injuries at school and supervision of learners as playing an important part in the lives of learners at school.

The aim of this research has been to explore the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. It was clearly indicated from the data that some of the educators have a positive attitude towards being accountable for the safety and security of learners. They lack motivation to perform their duties more enthusiastically. The Education Department, both districts and provincial departments must encourage principals of primary schools to develop safety policies to organise workshops and courses which will empower educators on the measures aimed at ensuring the safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. The Department of Education must also provide schools with security guards and surveillance cameras to enhance safety and security of learners in primary schools.

Further research in this regard is strongly recommended in this field.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

#### **Interview Questions**

1. What is your understanding of a safe and secure school?
2. What is your view on the school having security guards?
3. How are educators at your school involved in supervising learners?
4. Do you regard school uniform as important for the safety and security of the learners at school? Motivate your answer.
5. What is the involvement of educators during training sessions?
6. How are the educators involved in the environment of the school?
7. Can you comment on the availability of First Aid kit at you school?



## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT FORM

I ..... hereby agree to participate in your research project on the problem of safety and security in managing effective teaching and learning in the primary school. I therefore grant you permission to interview me.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....



## **APPENDIX C**

### **INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS**

#### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW 1**

I: What is your understanding of a safe and secure school?

R1: A safe and secure school is a school free of injuries, hazardous objects that will harm learners, educators and visitors, but here at our school, learners are still being injured, there are still objects that can harm learners like broken bottles in their playground. Educators in that school are always supervising learners in classes and out of the classes. There is a security guard at the gate in a safe school to monitor the in and out movement of everyone coming in the school premises to make it a point that the school is safe and secure. Such a school has a safety and security policy and we have a safety and security policy that guide us on the safety and security of our learners. The environment inside and outside the classrooms is always the conducive one to learning. Their classrooms are clean and toilets are also clean. The garden does not have poisonous plants that can pose as danger to learners.

R2: I can say a safe and secure school is a school with ehhr, which is having school rules so that if there is anything that can happen at school, learners must know where to run to, and if there are school rules learners will know if this happens, we must do this. Such school also has a Code of Conduct and safety policy for learners, they are always communicated to learners, and learners always know what is expected of them.

R3: Okay ma'am, I can say that uhm, firstly we need to understand when we talk of a safe school that there should be an Act, firstly there should be an Act that is ruling the school. The Act that should be made known to the educators, they should be acquainted with the act. The Act is talking about the Occupational Health and Safety, and then we should all know about what is entitled in the Act.

There are some policies that we need to acquaint ourselves with when talking about a safe school. The policies like the school safety policy must be available in the office as it

guides the school on safety and security of learners and the learners Code of Conduct must be available at school. All the teachers must have those policies and must understand it perfectly well. They must interpret those policies to learners so that learners understand exactly what is expected of them pertaining safety policies.

R4: Okay, a safe and secure school is a school whereby umh, learners and both educators are free from any form of injury. Educators are always supervising learners in the classrooms and outside the classrooms. The environment is always the one that is conducive to learning. Classrooms are always neat and tidy. The grass of the lawns is always cut so that dangerous objects can be visible. The safety and security policy is available at safe and secure school because it guides the school on the safety matters.

R5: In a safe and secure school, learners must know where they must play and when to play so that they are always supervised. You know, where there are learners playing, risks will always be there so learners always need to be supervised. A security guard must always be there to prevent criminals from entering the school premises. A security guard must make it a point that the gates are always closed and they must open the gates only when there are visitors entering the school premises.

R6: Ehrr, a safe and secure school has a solid fence that surrounds the school and gates are always closed. Learners are not supposed to get out of the school premises except after school when they are going home. Learners are always being supervised in a safe and secure school. At this school, educators are coming late to classes for their periods and they do visits one another during school hours and leave learners alone and unattended.

R5: Again, in a safe school, learners must be taught on how the bell will ring in order to communicate with them. At our school when it rings thrice, they know that it is calling them to the assembly square, they all have to gather at the assembly for an emergency gathering. The bell ringing must appear on the safety policy because it is the way of communicating with learners and educators. I think the school policy must be communicated with the educators and learners together, learners must understand it.

R1: Some learners are bullying others and bullies are being reprimanded in a safe and secure school. Parents are always involved when their children have been involved in manners that are not approved by the school.

I: What is your view on the school having security guards?

R1: Safe and secure school has security guards. The security guards are controlling the gates at all the times in the safe and secure school, even after school hours, but here at our school, gates are always wide open and we do not have a security guard. During school hours, learners are not supposed to go out of the school premises except with the supervision of a parent or educator. Learners are only allowed to go out of the school premises when the bell that says its school out has rang but they still go out during breaks.

R3: I think in and out movement should be monitored at all the times. There should be a security guard at the gate who will always monitor the in and out movement of learners. Visitors and other people who come to school, people who deliver things must be registered at the gate and they are not being registered at this school.

R2: Learners must know that if gates are locked they must not go out of the school premises. They must know that they will only go out of the school premises only when the bell that says it is school out has rang. They cannot go out even if it is lunch break, they must understand that it is for their own safety and security. That is why we have people who have opened the tuck shop in the school premises for learners even though our learners go to the shops outside the schoolyard.

R6: Ehhr, to add on that, I think in and out movement in the school premises must be monitored.

R2: Here at our school we always involve the community because we regard our school as a community centre. We encourage the community to guard the school and take care of it. We also know that schools do not exist in isolation. We allow the community to use the school for the purposes of sports practicing, the church services, the meetings for their political parties and others. If we allow the community to use our school, they will always take care of the school. Some of those community members are the ones vandalizing the school.

R6: Our school is also an ABET centre and the community is benefiting the basic education from it. This way ensures that the local community protects the school at all the times. This also ensures the safety of our learners while in the school premises because the community will always guard the school and will always call the police if they suspect

something after school hours. A cornerstone of any school safety and security must be strong ties between school and home.

R4: To add on that, there is collaboration between school and the parent community. Not only should the learners experience a sense of belonging that add to their safety and security, but also their parents as guardians. This way, parents are volunteering to patrol the school grounds and it ensures the safety and security of learners.

I: How are the educators at your school involved in the supervision of learners?

R3: As educators, we must always ensure that learners are not left unattended in classes. We must always ensure that we are there for learners at all the times. There must be proper monitoring on learners. When learners go out, take notice of how long did the learner took outside, so that if there are problems you intervene quickly as an educator.

R5: Educators like me always attend their periods in time. We do not leave learners unattended. We always supervise them in subjects like Life Orientation when they do cut and paste with scissors. We always support them when they get injured.

R2: Teachers must make sure that learners do not carry sharp objects in classes, if the learners are working with scissors, make sure that you supervise them very close. Also make sure that they are using the round edged and not the sharp edged scissors.

R4: As an educator who is responsible for scholar patrollers, I always make it a point that I am always there by the street to supervise them. However, when it is the turn for some educators, they do not show up by the streets and learners are left alone. It is very dangerous for the learners to be alone there at the streets without the supervision of educators because the cars can knock them down and it can be hit and run.

R3: Nothing can beat a team, we are not always working as a team in some of the activities involving learners. Some of the educators leave learners alone, unattended and nothing is done to them. Most of them arrive late in classes for their periods. They even leave learners without supervising them in the playground during the sports training session and that is dangerous because a learner can get seriously injured in the absence of an educator while at the playground. Educators can be held liable for learners' injuries.

R5: Educators teach learners about their Code of Conduct and supervise its contents. A safe and secure school has a learners' Code of Conduct and it is always communicated

to learners. At this school, learners do not know their Code of Conduct. It always tells them about their good behaviour in the school premises. Learners do not have copies of a Code of Conduct that is written in a language that they all understand.

I: Do you regard the school uniform as important for safety and security of learners at your school? Motivate your answer?

R6: As educators, we also ensure the safety and security of learners by always preaching to them about the importance of wearing a school uniform. We also have a day in a week whereby educators are wearing their uniform with similar colours to those of learners in order to encourage them to wear their uniform always. School uniform helps the learners to be identifiable in case of accident on their way to or from school.

R4: In a safe and secure school, all the learners are always wearing uniform so that they can be identifiable, but here at our school, some learners are coming to school wearing private sometimes. If the learners are all wearing uniform, in case they got involved in an accident on their way home or to school, they can be identifiable.

R5: We also ensure that learners are safe and secure by encouraging them to always wear school uniform when coming to school, school uniform will help learners to look the same, and one cannot tell who is from a rich or poor family when they are all wearing a school uniform.

R3: Yes, the school uniform is important for the safety and security of learners. When learners are wearing a school uniform, no one can see the difference between the rich and the poor learners.

I: What is the involvement of educators during the training sessions?

R6: Here at our school, we monitor all our activities. You know, when learners are involved, accidents do happen when they are least expected. That is why they always have to be monitored. We monitor them to prevent unnecessary accidents from happening.

R4: Ehhr, during training sessions, educators not are leaving learners alone and this ensures that learners are not injuring themselves. Most of educators are always in the



midst of learners when learners are training. When accidents happen, we should be able to give a full report of what has transpired.

R1: In the sports training sessions, we try to make sure that under no circumstances should learners practice and participate without a warm up. If learners can practice and participate in sport without a warm up, they can injure themselves for an example by pulling their muscles.

R4: In every activity, we try to teach them to master the techniques, for an example in triple jump, they have to know the proper way of landing. They also have to wear the protective clothes like shin guards and helmets depending on the type of sport they are participating in.

I: How are the educators involved in the environment of the school?

R1: Overcrowding, we have many learners here at our school and they always bump into each other during break in the corridors or when they play because the playground is too small for them. Educators are helping with the creation of a safe and secure environment by trying to be in the company of learners at all times to avoid things such as bullying and violence towards one another.

R6: Bullying is also a problem at our school. Those bullies make others to feel unsafe and insecure because they always beat them and take their carries and they lunch boxes by force and even go to an extend of beating them. Bullying lead to learner's depression and anxiety even damages that cause low self esteem and can even lead to suicide.

R2: Violence amongst learners has affected the safety and security of our learners here at our school. Some learners have become so violent to an extent that they even take drugs. When they have taken drugs, they loose their minds and hurt themselves and other innocent learners.

R5: The size of the playground here at our school poses as danger in our school premises. We have too many learners and our playground is so small to accommodate all of them at the same time.

R4: At times, you can find that the playground is full of dangerous objects like wires, broken glasses and stones and they can injure learners when they play in the playground.

Sometimes learners are playing there on their own without supervision and it also affect safety and security of learners in our school.

R3: When there are people working in the school premises, they do not put the warning signs in places where they are working. They dig holes without warning learners or us.

R2: Again, in a safe and secure school, learners must feel that they are safe and secure. They must be free to tell their problems that they cannot tell their parents to their educators. They must trust their educators with their lives. Educators must encourage them to take care of their environment. Educators must lead by example and teach them to clean their classrooms.

R3: In a safe and secure school, toilets are always clean, I mean all the toilets, learners' toilets and the educators' toilets must be clean. Even the classrooms must be clean, toilets and classrooms must be cleaned daily. The school surroundings must be clean at all the times. Papers and plastics that are outside the classrooms must be picked always.

I: Can you comment on the availability of the First Aid kit?

R4: Ehrr, at this school we have a First Aid kit and it is important to have one, but it is not every educator who has been trained on First Aid. In the event of serious injury on the school premises, learners will only be taken to the doctor or clinic for their health and safety. First Aid educators will only treat minor injuries using gloves. No one must treat blood spillage without wearing gloves. Not to say the First Aid will prevent injuries, but it will treat injuries that need immediate attention.

R2: Some of our educators are not trained on First Aid to make sure that they help learners who are injured during school hours, and First Aid is very important for injuries.

R1: Ehrr, we do have a First Aid kit that is helping the educators with the learner injuries and I regard it as a very significant gadget in the school premises, it is in fact very helpful.

R5: Ehrr, I would like to talk about the excursions. During trips, most of the educators and the SMT accompany learners. Educators who are arranging the trip are always ensuring that the transport that is being used by learners is roadworthy and the driver have the necessary documents like the drivers license and a public license. During our excursions, we always take our First Aid kit along because one will never know what will happen on the trip. The First Aid kit helps us a lot in terms of treating the learner injuries.

R6: Ehrr, at this school we have a First Aid kit, but it is not every educator who has been trained on First Aid. In the event of serious injury on the school premises, learners will only be taken to the doctor or clinic for their health and safety. First Aid educators will only treat minor injuries using gloves. No one must treat blood spillage without wearing gloves.

I: Thank you very much for the interview and may God bless you all.



## **APPENDIX D**

### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW 2**

I: What is your understanding of a safe and secure school?

R1: A safe and secure school is a school whereby learners are supervised, not only in classes, but also even during breaks when they are playing. Learners of a safe and secure school always wear uniform so that they can be identifiable even when they are outside the school premises in the morning when they come to school and in the afternoon when they return back home. A safe and secure school is a school that has a security guard.

R2: In a safe and secure school, gates are always locked but at this school they are left open and controlled by prefects, when the prefects are in classes, no one is there to monitor the gates. The fence is always solid and the environment is always conducive to learning. The classrooms are always tidy in that school. The toilets in such a school are always clean and therefore are not smelly like at this school. The lawns are always maintained and there are no dangerous objects that might cut them, for an example like broken glasses and wires. Ehrr, educators are supervising learners in classes even in training session for the extra-mural activities but at this school it is only those responsible educators that are supervising learners, but as for others they do not care. It is well known that learner supervision reduce learner injuries and also ensures the safety and security of learners.

R3: In a safe and secure school, the gates are always closed except in the morning when learners come to school and in the afternoon when they go home. At the gates, there are security guards who are always there for twenty-four hours in such a school. Here at our school, we do not have a security guard but we used to have one in the past years. Ehrr, I think the safety policy plays the most vital role in a safe and secure school because it ensures the safety and security of learners and educators even of visitors. It always helps in identifying the possible hazards and helps on minimizing the risks. The school environment is always the one that is conducive for learning, classrooms must always be tidy and it is important that the toilets are clean.

R4: A safe and a secure school is a school whereby educators are supervising learners in classes and during breaks, they do not leave learners unattended as some educators are doing at this school, they do not come late for their periods. Educators in such a school supervise learners even in the playground when they are practicing for extra-mural activities. Gates of that school are always closed and a security guard is always monitoring them. The fence of a safe and secure school is a solid one so that no one can enter the schoolyard with open gaps that might be on the fence. Everyone entering the school premises must first report to the security guards, whether they are parents or visitors.

R5: A safe and secure school is a school that has a Code of Conduct for learners, and learners are aware of it, and they behave according to how it needs them to behave. The safety policy is always available to every educator and it is always communicated with learners so that it also becomes effective to learners. Gates are always closed in a safe and secure school. Learners and educators are always free from any form of any injury. Educators are not leaving learners unattended in classes. They are supervising the learners in classes even outside the classes.

R6: A safe and secure school is a school that has security guards and the gates in such a school are always closed, learners are not getting out of the school premises except after school. Educators are always monitoring and supervising learners, nothing is threatening the learners even during breaks. It is not like here in our school where educators are enjoying their breaks without supervising learners. Educators are not visiting one another during the learners contact time in a safe and secure school. Educators are not having the time stealing chats in such a school.

R2: The safety and security of learners at school is taken into account though at a very small side. I would say safety and security of learners is taken into account on the basis that there is a secure fence and gates are always closed. As far as teacher learner interaction is concerned, our school is not doing enough. The overcrowding of learners impact negatively on the safety and security of our learners because learners always bump into each other during breaks due to the limited space or playground. They also bump into each other in the corridors.

I: What is your view on the school having security guards?

R6: Security guards must always be at their points to protect the school, so every school must have its own security guards. They must monitor every person entering and leaving the school premises. They must keep the register of every person entering the school.

R4: The school must hire the security guards because we do not have them now. Security guards will ensure the safety and security of the school and everyone in the school yard.

R3: When the school has security guards, criminals will always be deterred from entering the school yard. We used to have a security guard at the gate to prevent the wrong elements from entering the school premises but due to lack of finances we don't have a security guard anymore. The school gates are not always closed even though learners are going out only after school

R2: If a school has security guards, they must make it a point that the school is always protected. Learners must feel safe in the school yard. Security guards will always monitor the entering and the exit of everyone in the school yard.

I: How are educators at your school involved in supervising learners?

R4: Safety and security of learners is being supervised by making sure that educators always attend their periods and they do not visit one another during school hours. Learners are always supervised by educators at all the times. The educators are always attending their periods and their classes. Educators are not absenting themselves from school for no apparent reasons. A safe and secure school must have a safety policy that ensures the safety and security of learners. This safety policy proves that safety is not the results of luck or magic at this school, but the consequence reflection, careful planning a function of thought and effort. It is, however, hard to imagine a cause more deserving for our thought and effort than safety and wellbeing or our learners. The contents of the policy are supervised and put into action by educators.

R1: As educators, we ensure the safety and security of learners by reporting the broken windows to the office immediately. The class educators always lock classroom doors after school. All the defective equipments are put to a place where learners cannot reach them. Even all the sports equipment is being removed after use. We always keep the classrooms clean everyday.

R3: Educators who absent themselves from school put learner's lives at school in danger. When there is no educator in the classrooms, learners do as they please. They are not supervised and therefore their safety and security in the school is compromised, some educators do as they please. When learners are not supervised, they are being endangered. At the same time when learners are being supervised, unnecessary accidents are being avoided. We have a problem of overcrowding here at our school, so when some educators absent themselves from school time and again, it makes matters of learner's safety and security to be worse.

R5: In the morning here at our school, the prefects ensure that the gates are closed. According to SASA, educators are compelled to supervise learners during lunch break, unfortunately the learners enjoy their lunch break on their own without the supervision of their educators.

R1: As the SMT of this school, we always make it a point that we buy the learner support material like the scissors that are round edged and not sharp pointed. We make it a point that educators supervise learners when they are cutting and pasting with scissors because scissors can be dangerous whether sharp or round edged.

R2: We ensure the safety and security of learners preventing learners from bullying one another by supervising them at all the times. We call the parents of the bully to help reprimand his or her child, meaning we are involving parents. We do not allow the learners to cause harm to others directly or indirectly. We suspend such learners who bully and harm or injure others and at the same time following SASA.

R4: The use of dangerous educational support material like the scissors is always supervised because they are can be dangerous to learners. With learners, accidents happen at the blink of an eye.

R6: Some educators still have their chats that are stealing the time of learners. They have their chats during the learners contact time. This proves that there is lack of supervision at this school. Some of them ask for permission to run their errands immediately after the learners contact time and therefore they leave learners behind in the school premises or even during the learners contact time. You can find that some of those learners get involved in the fights while in the school premises.

I: Do you regard school uniform as important for the safety and security of the learners at school? Motivate your answer.

R1: Yes, I regard the school uniform as important because our learners are being encouraged to wear a school uniform always. When they are wearing their uniform, they cannot be robbed of their expensive designer label clothes they will be wearing. We hear from the media that in the countries like United States of America, learners have been killed because of their expensive designer label clothes.

R2: Learners are always wearing their school uniform so that when an outsider pretends to be learners, they can be identifiable.

R5: The school uniform helps our educators to treat learners equally because no one can realise the rich or the poor learners. They will all look the same in their uniform.

R3: The school uniform helps learners who are not from rich families to look the same as those who are from rich families. No one will wear the designer labels when coming to school.

R4: The responsible educators are always encouraging learners to wear school uniform as it helps them to look uniform like word says. No one can differentiate between the rich and the poor learners because in their uniform, they look the same.

I: What is the involvement of educators during the sports training sessions?

R2: We ensure the safety of learners by making sure that during the sports training sessions learners are not training without a thorough warm up first. In sports activities we make it a point that we teach the techniques to learners like in athletics we teach them the correct landing in high jump, long jump and triple jump. Our learners do not take part without the proper protective clothes, for an example, helmets and shin guards.

R6: Before the learners can take part in the playgrounds, we always make sure that the ground is free from dangerous objects like stones, wires and broken glasses. We also remove sports equipment like athletic spears, hurdles poles and short put after using them, they are always being put in a safe place where learners cannot reach them.

R1: Most of us are supervising the learners during training sessions for extra mural activities. To ensure learners' safety and security, we make sure that classroom plugs and lights are always maintained.



R3: In sports we always we keep the sports-ground free from dangerous objects. We remove the sports equipment after using them. When learners are playing sports like hockey and cricket, learners always wear the protective clothes like shin guards and helmets. Even in soccer, players are always wearing shin guards. Practising without proper clothing and playing without proper clothing is not accepted.

R5: In sports, our educator-coaches are always coaching the right technical execution of skills. Coaches are acting reasonably taking a number of precautionary steps or approaches to ensure the maximum safety and security of learners. As a school, we cannot afford learners' injuries due to lack of lack of educators' involvement during sports training sessions.

R5: The safety and security of learners at my school is being compromised. Some educators do not love sports and do not worry themselves about the safety and security of learners during the sporting activities.

I: How are the educators involved in the environment of the school?

R4: Some are doing much as they encourage learners to clean their classrooms and pick papers outside.

R2: The lawns are always maintained to make the environment to be the one conducive to teaching and learning. There are flowers and trees planted in the school yard and they are taken care of.

R3: Learners know their boundaries, they know where to play and where they are not supposed to play.

R1: We teach learners to be responsible citizens by teaching them to clean and keep their classrooms tidy at all the times. Most of our classrooms are tidy here at our school. We teach them that cleanliness is close to God.

I: Can you comment on the availability of First Aid kit at your school?

R5: We have a First Aid kit here at our school and we also apply First Aid for minor injuries but for most sever ones, learners are taken to the doctor, clinic or hospital.

We have a First Aid kit here at our school and we also apply First Aid for minor injuries but for most sever ones, learners are taken to the doctor, clinic or hospital.

R2: When there are injuries at our school, we apply the First Aid to the injured learners.

Our school do have educators who are responsible on First Aid. Even though it is not all the educators who are knowledgeable on First Aid, our school do have educators who are responsible on First Aid. They are the ones who take care of the injuries because they are trained.

R4: It will be advisable if all the educators can know First Aid but unfortunately it is known by two in each phase because they are the ones that were trained by the Department of education on First Aid.

I: Thank you very much for the interview and may God bless you all.

